DONALD MARCY

ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS

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HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
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DONALD MARCY

BY

ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS

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DONALD MARCY.

CHAPTER I.

THE HERO IN A FIX.

It was a dark night at Harle; one of the darkest yet seen that term. It was the fall term, and was now well under way by several weeks. The police force of the little city, who took their well-earned vacation like the rest of the college officers, and with them, were hard at work now. In fact, it had been a particularly busy season. The Sophomore class was large; it had some irrepressible leaders. Freshmen were a spirited lot that autumn; they did not swallow tyranny like gruel; showed fight; put the Sophomores on their mettle; made trouble, and, in general, the students had manifested so little consideration for the feelings of their civil protectors that the force was not on good terms with them.

Jerry McCarty, the biggest, the broadest, the toughest, and the handsomest of the corps, was stationed on College Street. He had the heaviest beat in town; and, while he was exceedingly proud of it, complained of it proportionately, as most of us do of our privileges. Jerry McCarty paced up and down the sidewalk gloomily. There ought to have been a moon, but there was n't. This fact seemed to make the night darker than if the moon had gone to any of the vague geographical destinations to which, when not due in College Street, she betook herself in Jerry's mind. China he thought the most convenient for her; but his son, who was "educated," and attended the grammar school, averred that she stopped at Surinam.

The clouds were as black as the policeman's boots. Even the street lamps seemed to be under the weather; they burned sadly, and the last two on the beat had flared, spluttered, and gone out in a shower of broken glass.

"Put wather in the kirosane, have they?" growled Jerry. "Stoning the chimbley, hain't they? the spalpeens! It 's that dark, they might murther the Prisident forninst

my eyes, and I should n't see him livin' till he lay dead before 'em. There 's a-goin' to be the devil of a row kicked up to-night, or my name is Saint Pather! I must telephone for the lamplighter, bad luck to 'em! Lavin' the bate empty till I get to the signal and back agin, the raskills! "

Now Jerry McCarty was a good-natured giant; nobody let the boys off more easily; but he looked very terrible as he squared his huge, angry shoulders and thundered away to telephone to the Street Lighting Department that two lamps were out. Of course, for a few minutes, this left the end of the beat, where the road turned off to the campus, comfortably dark. Of course the boys — some boys — some boy — knew that, and of course Jerry knew that the boys knew that. But there was nothing to be done about it, except to telephone, and hurry.

" Glory be to God, if I nab the midical department! " muttered Jerry. " It 's me own belafe they 'd prefer to sthale their corrups than cut him up of his own accord, any time."

With undoubted injustice, it is to be hoped, the students had been under some

slight suspicion, that term, in respect to their medical school. A dissecting-room somewhere, it was suggested, had been illegally supplied, "just for fun." Wild rumors of rifled graveyards "up country" had gone muttering through the college circles. There was something about a negro, and a pauper baby, and so on. At all events, Jerry, with the readiness of hard experience to think the worst of a Harle student, accepted these unsavory reports with professional ease and pleasure. It was the top of his ambition to catch a body-stealer in Harle University.

It was beginning to rain a little; not a hearty storm, but a puttering drizzle, which went a certain way toward keeping people within doors. The streets of Harle, generally busy enough, were indifferently filled that night. The foot passengers walked moodily with their hats over their eyes; the heavy teaming of the day was over, and vehicles in that part of the city were few. It was time to study, and the boys, as everybody knew, were all in their rooms and hard at work.

Jerry McCarty was scarcely well out of sight from the line of vision afforded by the last of the two broken lamps, when, if he

had been upon his beat, he would have heard the rumbling of heavy wheels coming up College Street from the outskirts of the town, and approaching slowly; perhaps the trained ear of the policeman would have thought, approaching cautiously. But the policeman was not there to hear.

"Good-by, Peel-er!" hummed a gay young voice beneath its breath. There being no "Peeler" to overhear this either, the cart drove boldly on, quickening its pace a little, and so, trundling carelessly up to the turning of the roads, hesitated one second, it seemed, whether to go on or to take the route to the campus. The cart was now near enough to have been clearly examined in the imperfect light. It was a common dumping-cart, drawn by a skinny old horse who seemed to be quite unhappy, and to find the only relief possible to existence in waltzing from side to side of the street, and trying to run into things. At the moment when the driver hesitated at the corner, the horse made a dead set for the lamp-post, which he succeeded in missing, being jerked back by a vigorous hand. There was a covering of canvas, or burlap, thrown over the contents of the cart; beneath the burlap the edges

of a cotton quilt or comforter protruded with the persistence of a thing which had been tucked in hard, and left to stay. The driver seemed to be a simple fellow, — some poor day-laborer out on an extra job. He wore a very ragged overcoat and an old felt hat slouched over his eyes. In fact, the only thing visible about the driver was a mass of brown curls, which escaped from the old hat merrily and twined about the fellow's too clean young neck and ears. He wore mittens of blue yarn, and handled the reins well, though with some lack of expertness so far as the covering of his hands was concerned; he had not wholly the ease of one used to driving in yarn mittens.

This plain fellow, having decided, apparently, to turn the corner, now intimated as much to the skinny horse, who plainly took offense thereat, and bolted for a big elm-tree opposite the quenched street lamp. His honorable intention, so far as one could interpret it, was to smash up his driver and get home to his own supper, or whatever passed for that. The carter was fully occupied in settling the difference of opinion between himself and the horse, when a hand of iron gripped his shoulder.

"Got you!" cried Jerry McCarty succinctly.

"Bad luck to yez!" cried the carter angrily. "I 'll sue yez for damages! Whoa, there! Howly mother, I will, then! Arristin' of a horny-handed son of toil on his way to the bosom of his family with an honest day's arning, begorra! I 'm late to me victuals. Whoa there! Who-a! Onhand me, ye vagyband, and lave me home to supper. Do ye take me for one o' them disreppitable sthtoodents, thin? *I 'm* an honest man, I am! *I 'm* a law-abidin' an' hard-workin' citizen! Relase me, or I 'll sue yez for damages as will send yez to the poor-house marchin' time! Relase me, sir! *Whoa!* ye thunderin' thafe of a skileton!"

"Don't know yer hoss very well, do ye?" said the policeman quietly. "Come, now, sir, that 's too thin, begorra. You don't catch Jerry McCarty with that salt, me young gentleman. I arrest you in the howly name of the Commonwealth, Mr. Marcy."

"Marcy?" cried the cartman, with a kind of pathetic bewilderment. "*Marcy?* Me name is Dennis O'Flaherty, as me wife, which was a Sullivan, will testify. Me fayther's name was Dennis before me, and me grandfayther" —

"Where do you live?" asked Mr. McCarty indulgently.

He did not, meanwhile, relax his hold of the other's shoulder. The skinny horse took the opportunity to back into the lamp-post, where he caught the axle and stuck. This seemed to give him great satisfaction; and it certainly added an element of repose to the scene between the carter and the officer.

"Me home is at No. 16 Dublin Street," announced the carter promptly. "I rint it for five dollars the month, which it is a dacint tinnimint. Me wife sets awaitin' me with nine small childer beyont her at this livin' minit, Mr. Officer, an' yez arristin' of a innocent husband an' fayther; a hard-workin', honerrable, horny-handed" —

"Come, now," interrupted the policeman calmly; "you 're no saplin', sir, but you may as well come along wid me. No. 16 Dublin Street is a very dacent place, as it is my privilege to know, bein' as it is my identical home, sir, which I rints me own self this half year. Try again, Mr. Marcy."

"Oh, Jerry!" cried the carter in a changed tone. "How in the world did you know me — this time?"

"I 've nabbed you too often, sir," said

Jerry serenely. "Don't I know them curls?"

"But you never *got* me, Jerry. I never *did* anything, you know. Come, Jerry! I own I 'm up to mischief, but I never did a mean thing in my life. Did I, Jerry?"

"Can't say as you have," admitted Jerry slowly. "I 've seen wus; an' I 've seen better, too, sir. There 's all sorts. But I 've got you now, sir, an' the asier you come along wid me the better for ye. What 's in that cart, Mr. Marcy?"

"Turnips!" said the student promptly. "I am taking a load of turnips home to my wife, Biddy O'Flaherty. She 'll never see them now, Jerry. Nor any one of those nine poor children. They 'll starve, Jerry, — all on your account."

"*What is in your cart*, sir?" repeated the policeman sternly.

"See for yourself," said Marcy carelessly. He sat back on the board seat of the dumping-cart, and nonchalantly lighted a cigar, which he puffed quite pleasantly in the policeman's face.

"That I won't, then!" cried the officer, edging off. "You don't catch me a-handlin' of 'em, sir. My dooty don't require it."

"Oh, do, Jerry!" urged Marcy, with twinkling eyes. "Just uncover the cart, and look for yourself. I'm sure it's your duty, as an officer of this Commonwealth, to examine the contents of this cart. Do, Jerry!"

"No, sir!" insisted Jerry. "Not by a long shot. They'll do *that* at the station. That's *their* business. Yours is to come along wid me, sir. Hurry up, now! I can't be foolin' wid yer any longer. Off wid yer!"

"We may as well ride," said Marcy good-naturedly. "If I've got to go to the police station, I'll go in style. *You* may drive, Jerry. I won't run, — on my honor I won't. It wouldn't be any use if I did. I'd rather go to the station than drive this blamed beast another block. I'll sit still, if you'll only drive. Just see him, Jerry! I think he has the blind staggers, don't you? — or else he's drunk. I thought for a good while he was drunk. Just look at him! See him wriggle for that lamp-post! Got your lamps lighted, haven't you, Jerry? I wonder how they happened to go out? Look out, there! He's standing on his head now. It's a way he has. I think it

must be epilepsy. My wife, Biddy O'Flaherty, made me a present of this horse. She does n't know much about horses. I think she got cheated; don't you? I hate to hurt her feelings. I don't tell her, except when he busts axles or runs over boys. He 's smashed up several boys. He 's a very interesting horse. Oh! I tell you, Jerry, — *arrest the horse!* That 's it, Jerry, you arrest the horse — for drunkenness in the first degree! — or could n't you make it vagrancy? You just get this animal to the station — and look at what 's in the cart — and I 'll venture you 'll be promoted; and I 'll go home and learn my lesson. Won't that do, Jerry?"

Jerry smiled grimly. He could not help it. Nobody could help it when Marcy was in the case. He was such a happy-go-lucky, pleasant fellow. When his young voice pealed away into the rainy night, ringing merrily, shout on shout of happy, boyish laughter, Officer McCarty laughed, too, though he did n't mean to, and the policeman and the culprit came up to the police station with a festive, innocent appearance, as if they were carting lemonade to a Sunday-school picnic. The officer was smoking

one of Don Marcy's best cigars, and Don himself leaned heavily against Jerry's shoulder, as if they had been intimate friends.

The police sergeant received them as a matter of course. He was not surprised to admit a student of Harle University within his own classic walls. He did, however, give one glance at the boy's face with keen, experienced eyes, which said: —

"Ah! a new one."

But his lips said nothing at all. He opened his book silently to record the case.

"Name?"

"Look here," said Marcy; "there 's a mistake about this."

"Of course," said the officer; "there always is. Name?"

"All right," replied Marcy pleasantly. "I 'm not ashamed of my name. May I finish my cigar? Thank you. Donald Marcy; that 's my name, — Donald C. Marcy. C stands for Carrington. Carrington was my mother's name. She was a Carrington, of" —

"Never mind particulars, sir. Residence?"

"New York city."

"Ah! Father's name?"

"T. B. Marcy."

"Occupation?"

"Well — he takes care of his income."

"Residence?"

"Lexington Avenue."

"Offense?" asked the sergeant, turning to the policeman.

"I was driving a drunken horse," interposed Don Marcy. "I was out for a little ride; I could n't afford a stylish turnout, and the horse got tight. You just go out and look at that horse, Mr. Officer. Ask *him* his father's name and occupation. I 'd give a better cigar than this to know."

"Is this the way they drive," asked the officer, looking Don over, "on Lexington Avenue?"

"Oh, come, now," said Don, "we 've chaffed enough. Really, there 's a serious mistake here. I 'm a Harle student, I own; but I have n't done anything else to be brought to the police station for. You 'd better ask my pardon, and let me go."

But Jerry McCarty had gone up and exchanged a few words with the orderly in an undertone. The orderly raised his eyebrows with an expression of keen, professional interest, and took down a pair of handcuffs from the wall behind his desk.

"Oh, see here!" said Marcy. The affair began to take on a more serious look than he expected. For the turn of a minute his merry face grew grave. "Suppose, Mr. Officer," he added, "you just tell me the nature of my offense against the statutes of this Commonwealth? I'll be switched if *I* know."

"You are arrested, sir," replied the sergeant, without any sign of pleasantry, "upon the suspicion of body-stealing. It 's offense enough, I take it."

"*Ah!*" cried the college boy.

His mobile, educated features assumed half a dozen expressions in as many instants. The experienced officer watched them, and looked puzzled. Jerry McCarty presented a memorable appearance, — a mixture of professional vanity and personal regret. He really did like Don Marcy. He felt sorry to attain the chief success of his service in the distinguished corps of Harle at the boy's expense.

"Very well," said Donald Marcy. He leaned back on the wooden bench, and laid his curly head against the station wall; then remembered what social degrees of heads had preceded him in that position, and sat up and put his slouch hat on.

"If you 've found out," he added, "I suppose the game 's up. I won't bother you unnecessarily. Go out and look for yourself, Mr. Officer. Unless you 'll send Jerry. I wish you *would* send Jerry," he pleaded. "Jerry is anxious to see that body."

"No, sir!" said Jerry McCarty firmly. "I know my dooty, sir, and the unkivering of that corrups ain't. With your permission, sir, I 'll take another job. I likes 'em before risurrection, if I 've got 'em to handle."

"Don't be too particular, Jerry," objected the sergeant. "Just detail Symmes to watch the prisoner, and come along with me. We 'll examine the body together, if you 're sure there *is* a body."

"He don't look it, exactly," added the orderly in an undertone, as he and the policeman went out into the rain together to the cart. "But I take your word for it, McCarty. You don't often miss."

If a policeman can ever be said to tremble, Jerry McCarty was that policeman when the sergeant ordered him to take off the burlap from the soaked and unsavory cart. If a policeman can ever be said to grow pale, Jerry was that policeman when

he was bidden to turn back the cotton comforter which covered the awful contents of Mr. Dennis O'Flaherty's turnip cart. It *was* rather an ugly moment. The electric light from the police station shed a steady, ghastly glow upon the uncanny scene, to which the drunken horse added a wild interest at that moment by falling in a fit; or perhaps he called it a faint. Marcy, from the station, called through the open door, whither the officer, Symmes, under whose guard he was left, had accompanied him, to allow him to watch the procedure. Marcy suggested that the horse was used to smelling-salts and missed them.

"There!" said the orderly, flinging back the last corner of the comforter.

"*Ugh!*" cried Jerry McCarty.

"What 's the game?" asked Symmes.

But Marcy, leaning nonchalantly against the side of the doorway, tossing away the end of his cigar with a light fillip of his delicate hand, — Donald Marcy said: —

"Well, gentlemen, may I go back to college now? I 'd like to get there in time to find out where to-morrow morning's recitation is. Jerry! Say — *Jerry!*"

But Mr. McCarty was gone. He had

taken himself back to his beat with inglorious and melancholy haste, long remembered at that police station.

The cart contained an empty barrel — an old barrel covered with tar; some brushwood freshly gathered from the country, and a basket or two of pine-cones. That was all.

"I was detailed to provide material for a bonfire," explained Marcy, smiling. "It 's against college law, I own. I don't say I 'd any business to do it. Jerry 's spoiled the prettiest blaze of this term, I 'll say that much for him. But say, Mr. Officer, it is n't a state's prison offense, is it? It does n't hurt the feelings of the *Commonwealth*, does it, if I run the risk of forty marks to light a tar-barrel on the campus? Hey?"

"No," admitted the sergeant sadly, "I don't know as it does. I guess we 'll have to let you go. But don't do it any more, Mr. Marcy."

"Look here," said the young fellow, with a touch of earnestness; he lifted his clear face pleasantly to the dark countenance of the officer. "I want you to understand, Mr. Sergeant, — just erase my father's name, will you, from that book? I 'll be glad if

you 'll remember that I don't get to this station, except by mistake, sir. I 've had my share of fun in this college; I don't deny it. I dare say I shall have some more. But I don't sneak, and I don't do a low-lived, mean trick, and I don't steal. Come, now! Do I look that kind of chap?"

Donald had now taken off his disguise; the ragged overcoat lay in a heap at his feet, — he tossed it across the dumping-cart with a gesture of disgust. Somehow, he felt a little ashamed, in spite of all that grand manner of his. He held the slouch hat in his white hand. The yarn mittens were gone. He stood in the quiet dress of a young gentleman, and bowed gracefully to the officer.

"No," said the sergeant, looking him over. "I can't say that you do. But you 've made me a sight of trouble."

"*You* trouble!" cried Don merrily. "Consider, gentlemen, what you 've made *me!* I 've got to drive this plaguy horse three miles to find his master; he 's a poor man, and I promised to 'take' the beast back 'tenderly,' and I vowed I 'd 'lick him with care.' And the worst of it is, there won't be any bonfire!"

Lifting his hat jauntily to the officer, the boy climbed back into the dumping-cart, and rode away into the rain, singing: —

"When Fresh, they used me rather roughly,"

at the top of his healthy lungs.

"Say, Peeler!" he called back, far down the street, "something 's happened to this horse; I think he 's dead. Would n't you offer him as material to the medical department? Don't — you — think — they 'd — like — him?"

CHAPTER II.

A RUSH.

HARLE COLLEGE was excited. It was a temperate excitement, relatively speaking, for the occasion was what might be called a mild one. It was nothing madder than a "rush." Every college boy knows what a rush is. They were a specialty at Harle. At this time of year, when the long autumn nights set in early, when the elder faculty found it hard to see without their spectacles before tea-time, and the tutors were busy in their rooms burrowing into to-morrow's problems, — the text-book being still too new to the tutors to make the lesson easy, — when it was just cold enough to give a snap to the air and a fillip to the fun, and not so cold as to make the feet stiff and the fingers numb; then the rush was in its prime. Then the Sophomores and the Freshmen, new acquaintances yet, but thoroughly introduced, had formed opinions of each other's mettle, and were zealous to test it. Then nobody began

to study till eight or nine o'clock, and supper was over at seven, and opportunity was at its best.

On the evening of which I speak, the stars were out. Not a cloud was in the sky. There was no moon. A light, stimulating breeze had started up since dusk, and gave a zest to breath and body. The foot rang on the frozen ground, and the chorus of fine, young voices singing on the college fence echoed to the sky. Harle boys are good singers; and, up to reasonable hours, the tutor hindereth not. Their répertoire was vigorous and varied, if limited: "Lauriger Horatius," "Swe-de-le-we," "Come to Dinner Just Now," "Trankadillo," "Nelly was a Lady," "Hit the Coon," "Prexy 's Gone to Boston," "How can I Bear to Leave Thee?" "Excelsior," "The Landlady's Daughter," "One Fish-Ball," and so on. This happened to be the programme for that particular occasion.

The boys sang with uncommon spirit. In fact, it soon became evident that they were making as much noise and as little music as possible, and that their numbers were remarkably few.

The first hollow-eyed tutor who looked up

from the maddening pages of his Analytical Geometry to glance out of the hall window at the group upon the fence would notice this; steal down in his slippers on tiptoe to see what it meant; guess, if he were clever, that the concert was "a blind," and that the squad detailed upon the fence were doing unwelcome duty to distract the interest of the faculty, while the mass of the boys were up to mischief somewhere else. Then, if he were not too old a tutor, recently graduated, if he felt quite kind, and had enjoyed his supper, and was getting on well with his Loomis, and nobody had been impertinent to him that day, and if he suspected nothing more serious than a rush, that amiable tutor would return comfortably to his book, or mingle, disguised, in the crowd, and nobody would be the worse for him, unless something happened. If anything did, he was a tutor on his guard.

Out on the brightly lighted fence a dozen or so boys sang loyally. They did n't like it, but they sang straight on. Back in the dark, upon the campus, fifty boys — one hundred — two hundred — five hundred — gathered silently and swiftly. There was some talking, but all in undertones. Groups

stood apart whispering or smoking idly, preparing for the fun.

Here and there in the dim foreground, lighted chiefly by cigar ends, prominent figures passed to and fro. Among these moved the lithe form of Don Marcy, straight and graceful; his square shoulders and nervous, athletic hand and arm, his brown curls and merry, blue eyes and clean mouth and well-cut chin, were familiar features wherever there was college fun.

A quiet fellow stood on the outskirts of the crowd, watching him with intent, affectionate look. This boy had black eyes and straight, black hair, and a good forehead; he was a trifle pale and thin; he was not very well dressed; he had the carriage of a student, while Don had the swing of a man of the world. Don made his way through the crowd, pushing the fellows to right and to left with an authoritative touch of his light cane, and came up to this boy.

"In for it to-night, Jamie?"

"I guess not," said Jamie Fleet. "I 'll look on awhile. I 've got a lot of work to do to-night."

"All right," nodded Don. "Just as you say. You 're always so awfully virtuous,

J.! Come, now! There 's nothing immoral in a rush, is there?"

"That 's your business, Don," said Fleet, smiling pleasantly. "I 'm not your keeper, if I am your chum. All I say is, I 've got too much to do. And hold your horses, Don, won't you? Don't let things go too far."

"Oh, no, indeed," replied Don confidently. "I never do *that*. Well, all right, J. Trouncey, won't you just form 'em in line?"

"Fleet does n't like rushes," observed a Freshman sneeringly. "He keeps on the safe side. It needs some pluck."

"Who said that?"

Like a flash-light Don wheeled. His fist clenched, his eyes blazed. He was very fond of Jamie Fleet. A better fellow than J. never attended to his business in Harle College. And Jamie was not strong. Everybody knew that he was n't by four weeks over a slow fever, yet.

"Calhoun said it," observed the boy whom Don had addressed as Trouncey. "I don't mind telling. Mean thing to say. Sick boy. 'T is n't fair fight."

"Lee Calhoun? Are you there?" thundered Don.

"Ye-es," drawled Calhoun. "I 'm here, and I said it, and I 'll say it again."

He stepped forward and confronted Don. He was a tall, indolent-looking, handsome fellow, with a sandy mustache and a sneer too pronounced for his years twitching its corners down.

"I don't fancy Fleet," he urged insolently. "He 's a dig. And why can't he dress like a gentleman, if he is one?"

"Here 's why!" cried Don, in a white rage. He sprang upon Calhoun, and would have twisted him like a willow stick in muscles so developed by rowing and the gymnasium that everybody in college respected his knuckles, — even Trouncey O'Grian; and Trouncey was the son of the prize-fighter of that distinguished name.

But Trouncey interposed, and Jamie Fleet himself.

"You 'll spoil the fun," urged Trouncey. "Can't stop to fight to-night. Have it out next time. I 'll second you."

"I can defend myself," put in Jamie quickly. "There 's no need of anybody fighting over *me*. Let him alone, Don, do. There are other ways than fighting. I 'll meet him in some of 'em any time he says, — class rank, for instance."

"Let him apologize, then!" cried hot-headed Don. "I 'll let you off, Lee Calhoun, this time, to oblige my chum. That 's the only reason, mind you. Get out of my way; I need your room. Now, Trouncey! Boys! Come, boys! Form! Form! R-r-r-ush!"

"I want to be a Peeler,
And with the Peelers stand;
A pistol in my pocket,
And a billy in my hand,"

sang the boys upon the fence.

As quickly as the passing of the word, the students formed, Freshmen and Sophomores leading.

A line of perhaps a dozen men from each class stood linked, elbow within elbow, presenting a solid front. Against them the rest pressed up, class to class; the remainder of the college joining according to inclination, though in the main the Juniors supported the Freshmen, while the Seniors backed the Sophomores. Then the huge mass gathered, nervous, electric, ready for anything in the nature of a fight, and stood, swaying and excitable. In the centre of the Freshmen ranks, guarded by picked men, stood the Freshman Cane, — the innocent object of this mighty warfare. A Sophomore victory

meant that no member of the Freshman class could carry a cane that year upon the streets of Harle.

The boys upon the fence began to be restless, and added to the musical interest of the occasion after this manner: —

"I dreamt that I dwelt in marble halls —
Where we don't go home till morning!
If you loved me still the same —
One, two, three, and away you go!
Last night she died — she did!
Drink her down! Drink her dow-ow-own!
Bi-ennials are a bore-ore-ore!
John Brown's body — Nelly was a lady —
Rush! Rush! Rush — and away we go —
Our souls come marching on!"

With this they came, piling, boy after boy, over the fence, and over each other, leaving the tutor in possession of the field. The rush was too much for the pickets; they deserted bodily, and came panting up to see the fun.

Before one could have said whether the play had fairly begun, it had become dead earnest. A solid mass, the students blocked and closed. Then by main force and sheer endurance the contest held. Now this side staggered, and then that. The Sophomores wavered, and the Freshmen made ground; and the Sophomores shook again; both lost;

each gained; it was a drawn game; it was a doubtful one; it was a persistent one; it began to be an angry one; it threatened to be a serious one. An onlooker would have received a new impression of the sense in the phrase, "*Clear push.*"

Tutors were on the scene now, but nobody noticed them. All attempt at secrecy was gone. The boys began to cry out and to yell like little beasts. They had forgotten everybody and everything except the mere brute, masculine instinct of fight.

That preëminent Sophomore, Donald Marcy, was in the thick of it, — in the front of it. He was usually in the front of things, if we except the marking-list in class-room.

His fine figure, eminent and alert, flashed to and fro; his strong shoulder gave many a magnificent shove. But he never gave a brutal knock. He did not lose his chivalry in his frolic.

Everybody else was not so controlled, and the play was waxing hot. Some heavy blows were given; some bruises, too serious, received. A colored student in particular — a Freshman — had a hard time. He was a sturdy fellow, and took his part in the rush as naturally as any white man; quite as

effectually as most of them. It was noticed that he played quite fair, and dealt no foul blows.

Suddenly the negro gave a cry, and fell. The mass of boys, too heavily charged to stop at an instant's notice, swayed to and fro above him. Some walked over him; one fell on him. Shouts and ugly words arose; then came the cry, so fatal to the fun of a college rush: —

"Give him air! Stand back! Hold up, boys! somebody 's down! somebody 's hurt! Air! — give him air! Who did it? Who hit foul? It 's George Washington Clay! Who struck Clay?"

"Calhoun did it! Calhoun! Calhoun! He hit a classmate!"

"He handled me," said Lee Calhoun, trembling, and white with rage. "He pushed me impertinently. He is a nigger, and I knocked him down."

Now the son of the prize-fighter stood near enough to overhear this. His big, good-natured face flushed slowly with the terrible blood of his inheritance. He said nothing. Nobody noticed him. He stepped up so quietly in front of Calhoun that the action attracted no attention till Calhoun lay flat

upon the ground, where one blow of Trouncey's mighty fist had stretched him.

"There!" said Trouncey O'Grian to the reviving negro, whom the boys were fanning and unfastening and helping to his feet. "He won't sarse you again to-night. This is a free college and a free country. Come and look at him, if you want to. He 'll have a headache for a week or two, I take it. Don't be scared, boys. He is n't hurt. You don't suppose I 'd be such a flat as that."

But the rush broke up now in confusion. Calhoun was insensible; the colored student bleeding; the tutors on the spot; the police coming; Trouncey O'Grian suspended; Calhoun marked; and generally there was the mischief to pay.

Don Marcy went to his room that night a little gloomily. Jamie Fleet was there, hard at his Antigone for to-morrow.

"Hi, Don!" he said cordially. "How 'd the rush go off? I did n't stay. I 've got an extra job on to-night. And it took you so long to get at it. Have a good time?"

"Got forty marks," answered Don soberly. "Ten more will expel me. I shall have to get up to prayers all the rest of the term. Counted on those forty to sleep over.

It was no kind of a rush, anyhow. Did n't get the cane. Nobody got the cane. Tutor got the cane. Jerry McCarty arrested the cane. Two fellows busted. Faculty there. I lost my smoking-cap, too. Got my clothes torn off of me — see! — clear down to the waist. I came home in a coat of Trouncey's. I sprained my shoulder somehow. Somebody squashed my toes. It was the greatest tom-fool of a rush, anyhow."

"Did n't pay, did it?" asked Jamie sympathetically.

"Where 's the Greek lesson?" growled Don. He sat down very hard and looked it over. He presented anything but a scholarly appearance; his handsome face was pounded and bleeding, his flannel shirt in strips, and Trouncey's big coat fastened across his shoulders by the sleeves. "They 'll flunk me, sure pop," he said disconsolately. "I have n't learned a Greek for two weeks, I 've been so busy. Well, anyway, I 've got to go and get a bath, *now*."

Lee Calhoun, while he was recovering from the effects of Trouncey O'Grian's blow, employed his time in writing home the most dismal letters that had visited his ancestral halls since Lee came to college. The result

of the most explicit was a communication from his father to the President of Harle, which ran as follows : —

PRESIDENT OF HARLE UNIVERSITY — *Sir :* My son complains to me that he is required to sit by the side of a negro student. I am compelled to make it a personal request that his seat be changed. Respectfully,

C. C. CALHOUN.

To this letter the President sent, by return mail, the following reply : —

C. C. CALHOUN, ESQ. — *Dear Sir :* I am happy to be able to inform you that your cause of complaint in the case of your son will be entirely removed at the close of this term. Hitherto, we have seated the students alphabetically in the recitation-room ; hereafter, they will be seated according to scholarship.

I am, sir, respectfully,

A. B. BAXTER,
President of Harle University.

CHAPTER III.

HAZING.

When Don Marcy was a Freshman at Harle, he took his turn at a slight acquaintance with the ancient and fortunately now unfashionable practice of hazing which had such a mysterious relation to the culture of a liberal education, as imbibed by the masculine race. Marcy's experience was in this wise: —

Nobody had handled him, or threatened to, till the first term was nearly over. He was such a good-natured, sensible lad, mannered with the modesty of real good breeding, and he had the lack of ostentation which accompanies plenty of money when one is born to it, or, at least, well-born to it, — he had such merry eyes, and treated everybody so decently; and was clever at recitation when he chose to trouble himself, and never swaggered or swelled, and was such a plucky fellow in particular, that it had been hard to make out a case against him. At last, how-

ever, a Sophomore raised the objection that he was too well dressed, and took a Professor's daughter to drive. This accusation carried the class, and a delegation of a dozen Sophomores waited upon Marcy one pleasant evening with vengeance in their eyes.

Donald was alone; he had no chum just then; he was studying in his comfortable room, — the most tastefully fitted of any in the college. It was not a showy room, but refinedly elegant, from the damask drapery curtains on his study windows and the brass fender and fire-set at the fireplace, to the little Persian rug that lay before the toilet-table in his chamber. Don was a fellow of delicate personal habits, and kept that room as neat as any lady might have done. He enjoyed it amazingly, and it had never occurred to him, by the way, that two views could be taken of the subject, till Jamie Fleet's father came in one day with Don's own parental visitor — they had been classmates, and had forgotten each other, and met again and remembered at Harle, where their two sons entered college together — to see the boy's room.

Dr. Fleet was a poor man, a country minister. He had the same gentle, attractive

eyes that Jamie had; he wrote for the reviews from his rural parish, and was not unknown in the great world where the elder Mr. Marcy lived upon his income, and frequented what is called "society."

"There, Fleet, what do you think of it?" asked the other father fondly. "Is n't this a pretty good thing in the way of a boy's room? I 've tried to make Don comfortable. He 's used to it, you know."

"Sir," answered his old classmate, smiling, and rubbing the toe of his patched boot over the pattern of the heavy Axminster on which they stood, "if you really want to know what I think of it, I 'll tell you. *You 'll never raise a scholar on that carpet.*"

It was on this unscholarly carpet that Donald tipped back his chair to listen when the hazing party knocked at his door.

"Oh, come in," he said pleasantly. "Delighted, I 'm sure. Make yourself at home, boys. A dozen? I 'm honored. Sit down? Have cigars? No? What *will* you have, then? *Me?* Stand upon that table and sing Mother Goose? Well, — I 'm not in voice to-night. Thank you, — no. I don't undress before strange guests. Nor I don't gargle my throat with raw alcohol and molasses —

and red pepper. I don't care to go downstairs with you, either, and out to the pump — See here!" cried the Freshman, suddenly changing his tone, and moving a chair into the doorway, where he seated himself serenely. "Do you see this crowbar? It 's a new one. I bought it last week. I 'm busy to-night. I 've got a lesson to learn. I 'll just sit here, if you please, and learn it. Now, gentlemen, *the first man of you that enters this room gets the crowbar!*"

With that, Donald's bright eye looked them over firmly and fearlessly; he took his book — and his crowbar; the hazing party, after a whispered consultation, took their departure. They dropped away, one by one, with an air of having an appointment with another fellow.

"Plucky," they said. "One of the kind! Equal to it! Could n't say what he 'd do! No go! Try another room!"

Now the Freshman has views about hazing; he considers it a brutal and unmanly practice. The Sophomore replaces these opinions by the lax creed of conscious power. The Sophomore regards hazing as an innocent custom, affording a little college fun, and to be deprecated, chiefly, when it meets

with mishaps which bring the practice before the attention of the faculty or the police.

Don, I regret to say, had suffered this "class change" in his principles. From a Freshman and a hazee he had become a Sophomore and a hazor. His position was undergoing one of the revolutions which circumstances wrest from any of us if we have not acquired a pretty firm moral and mental leverage of our own.

In the course of time — that is to say, in the course of the first term of Sophomore year — Don, without much thought, easily and lightly as such boys do such things, "for the fun of it," joined a hazing party which had for its objective point two or three unpopular Freshmen. Of these, Calhoun was the most prominent, and the especially doomed man. Calhoun had never been a favorite at Harle. From the first week of his college career he had contrived to create an atmosphere of personal irritation around himself. It was hard to say just how this was done, except by a series of petty offenses, all of them bearing in some form or other upon the sense of caste that in Calhoun was developed to a degree against which the hearty, healthy spirit of human equality

among his classmates rebelled. Calhoun, in short, considered himself a gentleman who must maintain his position. The students of Harle College considered him a disagreeable fellow who had n't any position, because he felt it necessary to maintain it.

This was a difference of opinion not easily reconciled, and snobbishness is the last fault which a college full of sturdy young democrats will overlook. In an institution where the negro was respected, and the prize-fighter's son personally respectable, Calhoun was not at home. The Vermont clergyman's boy and the New York gentleman's son knew how to adapt themselves to the social problems of that world-in-little which a large New England college represents. But Calhoun had received a different education.

The accident at the interrupted rush, in which Calhoun had been so unpleasantly prominent, gave the final touch to his unpopularity. A fellow who would spoil a rush, hit foul, and turn on a classmate, met with small favor at Harle College. From the date of that event Calhoun was doomed for the severest hazing of the year.

Donald Marcy went into the affair hotly enough. The vigorous sense of chivalry in

him, which Calhoun had so offended, was not balanced enough to keep him out of a secret personal attack, — ten men to one. It did not occur to him that he might be doing as mean a deed as Calhoun's ; clearly a meaner one from certain points of view, such as regulate the conditions of conflict between man and man in any other civilized set of circumstances outside of a college world. He plunged in, and thought about it as little as possible.

Calhoun was in his room when the boys came upon him, — a group of ten, disguised, masked, and determined. The door was locked. The hazors demanded admittance. Calhoun requested them, firmly enough, to visit a region geographically warmer than the entry of North Middle, top floor, upon that chilly night.

"May as well let us in," insisted Donald Marcy. "We 're bound to have you."

"I 'll see you further, first ! " replied the Freshman.

"It would save you some expense in locks," suggested one of the Sophomores.

Calhoun made no answer. The pleasant puff of a plantation cheroot came out through the cracks of the door. The hazing party

agreeably suggested that if he kept such a weed as that, he should invite them in for one apiece all round. Receiving no hospitality of this nature, they put their shoulder to the locked and bolted door, burst it in, and piled pell-mell into the Freshman's room.

Calhoun was standing there in the middle of the room, in his embroidered slippers and quilted dressing-gown, looking as pale and as plucky as was possible. He knew that he was unpopular in Harle College, and he knew that his hour had come.

"Why didn't you let us in?" asked one of the fellows. "It would have been better for you."

"I open my doors to gentlemen," replied the Southerner, "not to burglars."

There was something in the justice and in the dignity of this reply not calculated to soothe the hazing party, who revenged themselves by proceeding to extreme measures with their victim without further parley. One of the boys produced a pair of handcuffs, with which he intimated the intention of securing the Freshman, to start with; for, as they all knew, he was a hot-blooded fellow. This particular Sophomore, — his name, by the way, was Braggs; Ben Braggs, — when

he had taken ten steps toward Calhoun, uttered an exclamation more warm than polite, and retreated more heartily than he had advanced. He was confronted by a fine Southern rifle, held straight to his face; so close, that he could feel the cold lips of the weapon upon his forehead.

CHAPTER IV.

BURIED ALIVE.

HARDLY had Calhoun presented the rifle when he observed that he would be something-or-othered if they tried that again.

"Oh, come," said Don Marcy. "What 's the use, Calhoun? Why don't you put up with college fun as other fellows do? There 's no sense in shooting. We 're not blacklegs."

"Oh, are n't you?" asked Calhoun with his cold sneer. "It 's just as well you mentioned it. Pray, what *are* you, then?"

"Gentlemen and scholars," replied Don promptly.

"Really?" scoffed Calhoun. "Dear me! I 'm so glad you told me."

"Look here!" roared Trouncey O'Grian in his big, bass voice, "we 've fooled with you long enough, Calhoun. *I 'll* put those handcuffs on, if you please, in the name of the Sophomore class of Harle College."

Trouncey presented himself, breast to the

rifle, with incredible coolness, and made a magnificent spring upon the Freshman, whose arms he pinioned with his own mighty ones sooner than the time it takes to tell it. As Calhoun sank into the scientific embrace of the prize-fighter's son the trigger snapped, and the rifle dropped harmlessly to the floor as the handcuffs closed upon the Freshman's writhing wrists.

Trouncey O'Grian smiled. He did not stop just then to explain to his host that he had climbed into that room at supper-time — four stories up — by the blinds and a peg or two he had taken pains to insert, and a rope or so thrown from the entry window by a friendly hand, and had successfully ransacked the Freshman's apartments for that very weapon. Calhoun was understood to be a good shot; he came from Carolina. Trouncey had embarrassed that rifle with cold soapsuds, dried it carefully upon the outside, and put it back in the closet of Calhoun's apartment. For the chance that Calhoun might have discovered the trick and reloaded, — he risked it, being the son of his father. The law of chances was against it. Trouncey felt that it was the advantage of an education to know that.

It is my unpleasant duty to record that Calhoun was subjected to almost every indignity that Harle Sophomores, in those long-past days, ever inflicted upon an unpopular Freshman. The incident of the rifle made the Sophomores too angry to keep their senses.

Calhoun was choked, tossed in a blanket till he hit the ceiling, run out of his window on a rope, dangled in the cold night air in a very lightly robed condition, fed with milk from a bottle, and washed with vinegar and salt.

His infuriated resistance added fire to the boys' vengeance; and worse things soon fell upon him.

The night had now worn on to be quite late.

Seizing a convenient opportunity, when discovery was unlikely, the hazing party took their victim, dressed only in flannel and trousers, out of doors and tied him in a wheelbarrow, by means of which they rode him to a pump in the outskirts of the town. The night was cold. The water was colder. The Freshman was held under the pump, and, it must be admitted, cruelly ducked.

"I'll kill you!" hissed Calhoun between his teeth. "If I live to get out of this, I'll

shoot every man of you down as I would so many niggers."

"Pity you said that," drawled Ben Braggs. "We 'd have let you go, if you had n't. *Now* we shall have to bury you alive in simple self-defense. You 're in for it now."

"Look here," said Trouncey O'Grian, "we 've gone far enough. I move we 're out of it."

Trouncey's view of the case did not meet with general approval; and he, at that point, left the party. He said he did n't think it was fair play, and he was tired of it.

"All right," said Braggs. "We 'll do without you."

"Get him some dry clothes first," urged Marcy, excited and hesitating. "Anyhow, we must n't kill the fellow."

So Calhoun was taken into the shelter of a shed, and rubbed off, and put into fresh clothes that somebody brought from somewhere; and then, forthwith, that hazing party did proceed to an old, deserted cemetery without the city limits, where a scout or two awaited them, — standing like mourners, mutely in the ghastly dark. A coffin stood there on a bier. Beyond it, yawned a newly-made grave. The tombstones of the long-for-

gotten dead slanted tipsily, showing faintly white in the night, and in the flash of a single dark lantern, carried by one of the boys.

Calhoun was now wild with terror; but either he had too much spirit left to manifest the full force of his fears, or the boys were now too far gone in the hazing fever to appreciate the real seriousness of the situation. They were not brutes, though they acted like them; and who meant to hurt the fellow? It was only "college fun."

Calhoun was uncompromisingly buried. He was put into the coffin, the lid shut, only the face-lid turned back to give him air; he was actually lowered by ropes into the newly-made grave, and left there. Voices called to him to say his prayers. Other voices chanted dirges upon the edge of his grave. Then the earth began to drop upon that coffin, — a handful first. The half-insensible man, listening in an agony, heard a spadeful fall, — another; two, three, — more —

"Great heavens!" thought Calhoun. "They are burying me alive! I scared them, saying I 'd shoot them — and they 're afraid to let me go. I am murdered! I am buried alive!"

He called in mortal terror for help — mercy — life — pardon — everything he could think of that might appeal to the sympathy of the young savages. But no one answered him.

Steps retreated, — grew fainter, — ceased. The Freshman in his coffin was left alone. Giving one yell of despair, he swooned away from the consciousness of his situation.

CHAPTER V.

GHOSTS!

When the hazing party had stealthily left the cemetery, they stood outside the walls consulting in whispers what to do next. Don Marcy was not happy. A growing uneasiness possessed him to the exclusion of all pleasure in that night's performance. It did not seem to him as funny as he had expected, to put a live man through a mock burial, and go off and leave him in a coffin at the bottom of a grave.

"I move we go right back," suggested Don.

"Oh, no," said Braggs, "too soon yet. Scare him a little. Leave him there half an hour or so."

"I don't agree with you," urged Donald more earnestly. "I think we 've gone far enough with this thing, boys."

For his own part, Don wished he had backed out of the whole thing when Trouncey O'Grian did. But he did not feel like

saying so. He was a little ashamed that the prize-fighter's son should have shown a finer sense of hazing honor than he himself.

The rest of the fellows wavered, but, on the whole, disagreed with him. Ben Braggs carried the day, or, we might say, carried the night, and the students seated themselves on the cemetery wall, to wait awhile, till the buried Freshman should be suitably punished for all his general and particular unpopularity. A few took their cigars; but most of them did not smoke. The receiving-tomb looked a little too near, and too ghastly, rising gray and dumb in the darkness beside them. Thoughts they would not entertain glided through their minds like ghosts. They heartily wished, some of them, that the business were over. But they thought it "manly" not to say so. They began to talk in low tones, to keep each other's courage up. The fellow who held the dark lantern turned it round and round perpetually, with a benevolent intention of enlivening the scene. When the dark side came toward the graveyard, he looked over his shoulder. Then the fellow beside him would start and look over *his* shoulder. In fact, all those brave boys who had fallen, ten to one, upon a defense-

less fellow, and subjected him to outrages which the civil statutes would have probably justified him in resenting with the sacrifice of their ten lives, — all those courageous young men looked over their shoulders with a frequency and a nervousness surprising; and always did they look in the direction of the tipsy old tombstones, and the deserted dead.

While they were amusing each other in this desolate fashion, Donald Marcy, unnoticed by any of the hazing party, had slipped away.

He had now become too uneasy to bear it another moment. As he made his way back silently through the graveyard, to the spot where Calhoun had been left, he wondered how he ever could have thought it amusing to get into such a scrape as this. Stretching out his arms to feel his way, he shrank back with an awful chill; they had closed about the cold body of a slate headstone, a hundred years old. As he clasped it, the stone stirred, shook, and lumbered heavily over upon him. With an exclamation of horror, and a bruised knee, Donald extricated himself from the horrid weight and pushed on.

His feet sank in sodden places whose na-

ture he did not dare to contemplate. Stumbling in and out, and hurrying to put an end to these horrors, he tripped and fell over a large flat mound, which must have been a grave made not too long ago to have lost its natural proportions. Briers and mud rubbed his face and tore his hands as he lay there; and disgust entered his heart as he struggled up and made on.

He had now managed to reach the open grave where the partially entombed Freshman lay. As he came up to the dark and dreadful spot, it seemed less and less amusing to Donald that he should have had a hand in this affair. No sound issued from the grave. It was as still as it was dark.

"Calhoun!" called Marcy softly.

There was no reply.

"Calhoun! Lee Calhoun! Cal*houn!*"

Silence only answered what had become a very eagerly urgent cry. That silence did not seem funny at all to Donald Marcy; in fact, a biennial examination would have been funnier. It would have struck him as more interesting at that moment to have been cramming for rank, or earning the name of a "dig," or even getting up in season to go to morning prayers, or pursuing any of those

secondary and immaterial college occupations with which the fellow who "goes in for fun" fails to concern himself.

"Lee Cal-hou-ou-*oun!*" cried the repentant Sophomore, in real distress. "Don't make game of me! I've come to let you out. Speak up, man! Why don't you answer?"

But the buried Freshman, like other dead men, gave no reason why. The grave's depth was dumb to the cry of the grave's edge; there as anywhere; there as everywhere. Great heavens! What had the mock death become?

The murder?

Marcy, the cold drops bursting on his forehead, struck a match and held it, sheltered in his trembling hand, far over the gaping mouth of the grave. By the fluttering light he could distinctly see a sight which his young life carried with him from that moment, a scorching imprint, — a photograph cut in vitriol upon his bare and shrinking brain.

Lee Calhoun lay in the coffin as he had been left, quite quietly, his face turned over on one side; there were no evidences of a struggle. Why, a plucky fellow, a *live* fellow, could have got out! Calhoun's counte-

nance was the countenance of the dead; its pallor, rigidity, — the eyes, the jaw! Marcy gave one look, uttered a terrible cry for help, and without waiting for it, went crashing into that grave. He tore off the coffin-lid with his strong hands; he jerked the head of the unhappy Freshman into the air, sat the body upright, and felt for the heart. It seemed to him that it beat, but if so, it was a motion which could stop so much more easily than it could go on, that he felt no perceptible sense of relief.

The fellows did not come. Had they not heard him? Where *were* the fellows? And Marcy and the dead or dying man sat up together in that coffin at the bottom of that grave, as helpless and useless members of society as any two students in Harle University.

But Donald was an ingenious fellow, as well as a strong one, and, realizing now the full dreadfulness of his situation, put all his mind and muscle to the proof, and slowly lifted the unfortunate Freshman out of the coffin; and so, as quickly and gently as he might, he dragged the burden to the upper air, and laid it upon the grass at the grave's edge.

"Boys!" he called in an appealing voice. "Boys, come quick! Trouble here! *Fellows!*"

But the boys did not come; nor did they answer. Thinking that they were vexed with him for leaving the hazing party, and visiting the victim on his own responsibility, and that they purposely refrained from responding to his cry, or had indeed perhaps gone home and left him to his corpse and his fate, Donald reëxamined Calhoun's body as well as he knew how, putting to the test all his knowledge — he was surprised to find it as vague as his views of the higher mathematics — of the practicable means of resuscitating a human being from apparent death. It was awkward work in the dark and under the circumstances. He fanned the body; he breathed upon the body; he sat it up; he laid it down; he rubbed it and he warmed it. He had no water; he had no brandy; he had nothing but his own warm life and throbbing agony to save. He was so agitated that he began to sob there by himself. It was a terrible moment.

"There!" he cried at last, not caring if all the world should hear him. "That heart *does* beat! Thank God! Thank God!"

At this instant steps were heard upon the graveyard grass. Voices sounded. Figures were coming up, stumbling across the graves. They were not the boys.

After Marcy had left the hazing party, that philosophical group of young men sat on, entertaining themselves grimly upon the cemetery walls. A few ghost stories, mitigated by college anecdotes, a few cigarettes, and a pint of peanuts, served to pass the time. They did not immediately miss Donald. When they discovered his absence it was with extreme displeasure.

"He 's gone home," said one of the fellows contemptuously. "He 's backed out. He 's left us to finish the job."

"Marcy is n't that kind," suggested somebody else reasonably. "Great Scott! What 's that?"

"What 's what? Where?"

"*There!* There 's somebody coming out of that receiving-vault. I saw something more — there — past the door! See?"

"By Jove! No! Yes! Where? How? Yes! No, I don't! Do *you?*"

"No, I don't. Can't be anything. Great gracious! what makes you look so? You 're as pale as a woman!"

"Might be Marcy. *Must* be Marcy."

"Ghosts are played out," said one fellow contemptuously. "Protoplasm 's done away with 'em. Spooks are out of fashion. They give us the amœba these days. No chance for dead people. The missing link takes it. Don't be jackasses. It 's Marcy, of course. *Marcy!*"

The boys huddled together. They all looked a little gray about the mouth. He who had the dark lantern flashed it full on the receiving-vault.

Marcy was nowhere to be seen. They called him in every tone of jest, anger, threat, and entreaty. No one responded. One of the boys swore that the door of the receiving-tomb swung in and out upon its hinges. Another vowed that a muffled figure glided behind the old brick vault, and crouched and watched there. There was one fellow who saw six apparitions, and each had eyes of flame, and their winding-sheets smoked. Ben Braggs moved that they go home. He explained that he did not refer to the ghosts. They were on their own ground; had a right there, so far as he knew; and, so far as he cared, they were welcome to it. One of the boys reminded

him that they could n't go home and leave a fellow buried alive. He thought they might get as much as forty marks apiece for it.

While they were disputing and discussing the situation in their fashion, one of the most nervous fellows in the group suddenly gave a piercing yell, and took to his legs as fast as he could, without a word or sign of explanation. The boys sprang to their feet simultaneously, and glared at the receiving-vault with dilated eyes. Their teeth chattered in their heads when they distinguished, past the doubt or query of the coolest or bravest, two tall, vague, threatening figures advancing upon them from the tomb. There was no Marcy about *that*. The rest of the hazing party made after the nervous fellow as fast as possible, and stayed to make no further investigations. They got a good start, and clattered down the long, deserted, frozen road like wild colts. The apparitions gave chase. They certainly did that very thing. This circumstance added vigor to the scene. Presumably, the boys were younger and better gymnasts than the tenants of a graveyard of that ancient description. At any rate, they had their start, and kept the advantage of it. The ghosts gave out be-

fore long, very much out of breath, and returned to their receiving-tomb in ghostly silence.

Donald Marcy, sitting on the graveyard grass with Calhoun's head upon his lap, and Calhoun's pulse beneath his terrified fingers, looked up in his quick, alert fashion, when he heard the steps approaching him across the graves. He was uncomfortable, there is no denying. It was almost entirely dark. The figures advanced in a silence which was appalling.

There was no whisper; not a breath could be heard. They came like shadows, as unsubstantial, and as still. Don did not find this funny either; but he did not flinch; he was responsible for a human life, and he sat at his post doggedly.

Suddenly one of the figures melted from sight. It had never occurred to Don before that a ghost could stumble over its own grave; but this one had, — it had gone down in a heap upon the brambly mound. The other one came to a standstill beside it. Then a voice, live, human, and emphatic, broke the dismal silence: —

"Be jabers, then, I've thripped over a

dooced corrups! The oncivil gossoon! why don't he kape in his own quharthers? Saint Pather tache him manners!"

It was the too familiar voice of Jerry McCarty.

"Are you hurt, my dear sir?" inquired the modulated, controlled speech of a gentleman who was divided between wrath and laughter.

That was the educated accent of the tutor in North Middle's second floor.

Donald Marcy waited to see and to hear no more. Confident that Calhoun would now be discovered, and every care given to the unlucky Freshman, the Sophomore thought it time to give some attention to his personal salvation. He slid his knees out from under Lee's head, laid the body gently down, and glided away. In a moment he was over the graveyard wall, and dashing through the underbrush of a little grove of pines, which faithfully concealed his flight.

A slight noise whirred through the leaves over his head, followed by a sharp report. He recognized Jerry McCarty's revolver. But Jerry had missed that time, as he probably meant to.

CHAPTER VI.

IS IT MURDER?

When the monitor marked the roll at prayers next morning, he passed his pencil opposite the name of "Calhoun, Lee."

All the hazing party were conspicuously and virtuously present at that devotional exercise. They were thoroughly alarmed at the state of the case as daylight revealed it to college rumor. The facts were running like forest fire all over the university by eight o'clock.

The tutor, Mr. Middleton, to whose ingenious mind it had occurred in the course of the evening that something had gone wrong in his Freshman floor, had, it seemed, instituted entirely on his own behalf the chase which resulted in tracking down the offenders. His meeting with Jerry McCarty was one of those fortunate accidents which sometimes befall law and order in college government. Jerry, whose dogged and limited intellect had not yet evolved beyond the

absorbing subject of body-snatching, tracking the hazing party on his own account, confident, excited, and relentless, had come face to face with the tutor behind the receiving-vault. When the two men reached the open grave from which the flying figure of Donald Marcy had retreated in good order, Jerry's professional pleasure amounted to personal agitation, — he was so sure, now, of his game and his glory. The policeman's countenance, as he lighted and swung his lantern upon the prostrate figure of the Freshman, was a memorable sight.

"Begorra, it 's a corrups!" cried Jerry, radiant. "But, be jabers!" — his face fell like a plummet in a deep sea — "it 's a *live* corrups, bad luck to 'em! Glory to God!" added Jerry, with gratification, putting his practiced hand to Calhoun's heart. "It 's me belafe we 'll have a murther here, sir, ennyhow. There 's some comfort in that, sir."

The outlook for Calhoun, even as late as the next morning, was dark enough to justify the policeman's prognosis.

The poor fellow had been carefully removed to his room, and faithfully watched all night by the best medical skill in the

city. He was breathing, but still unconscious. His brain, the physicians said, was affected; how much, time only could determine. He might not outlive the day; in which event they should give a verdict of "Death from exposure and fright." He might fall into brain fever of a violent and deadly type. He might simply sink into insanity or idiocy. Such was the cheerful choice of results liable to follow from one evening's hazing, and "a little fun." Perhaps this is the place to say that such "fun" as this has been long since abandoned at Harle College. Calhoun's case came into the rude and now outgrown days of hazing history.

The students of Harle College were sober enough that morning. It was quite unnecessary for the hazors to assume any of those expressions of hilarity or indifference by which the college boy is accustomed to hide his head in the sand of his offenses. Such idle pretense would only have identified them in the general gloom and anxiety.

Donald Marcy, if not the most guilty, was, perhaps, the most sensitive of the culprits; and his distress was greater than the sunny, easy, happy-go-lucky fellow knew how to

bear. Life had gone lightly with Don; it had been one long play-day; the events of his young history had been so many games to be won on holiday afternoons. He had always come off on the winning side. His father had supplied him freely with money for the asking; his mother was an invalid who was disabled from interfering with his wishes, and quite unfit to do so if she could. From the restraints of a home which Don did not love very much, he had easily freed himself since he came to college, by vacation stays too short to interfere with his freedom as a rare and flying guest. He had traveled, visited, yachted, flirted, sung, joked, and laughed his way through his irresponsible youth so merrily and so charmingly, that it seldom occurred to anybody to find more fault with him than with a bumble-bee. He had never been a bad boy. Vice was vulgar, and Don had the tastes of a gentleman. On the whole, too, he had meant to study — some time; he would take rank — when he got round to it. The primary object of a collegiate education, of course, was to have a good time, and form pleasant acquaintances; that achieved, he really preferred to come singing to the upper end of the upper

division of his large class; in fact, he pictured himself as waltzing in among the honors at the turn of the dance, when it suited him, as some day it assuredly would. For Don was no dunce; in his solitary moments, — he had but few such moments; he was too popular, there was always a fellow around, or a girl to take somewhere, — in his attacks of occasional solitude, he went so far, sometimes, as to dream of scholarship, and intellectual power and the world of thought, and the glory thereof. But he supposed that kind of thing would come to him, somehow, without too much trouble. Everything else had.

Then he had been such a likable fellow; it had occupied most of his time to see that people loved him; they always did. It was a matter of course. Popularity is an occupation, if not a trade. Don had accepted his sincerely enough, — he was no trickster, — but it had kept him quite busy. Matters had always gone pleasantly with the lovable fellow. His classmates liked him; his young lady friends fell in love with him; his "sweep" and his laundress adored him; the society of whatever place he might happen to bestow his easy young presence upon

invited him; even the faculty had never been hard on him; he called on the Professor's daughters, and was on pleasant personal terms with the President, and, up to this time, had successfully evaded the blacklist of college discipline. Don had seen no reason why this sort of thing should not go on forever. When he came face to face with the full horror and the full danger of the Calhoun affair, into whose consequences he had suffered himself to slip so jauntily, the shock was something inconceivable by a more thoughtful or a worse boy.

Don was almost too miserable to keep about, and play the little part necessary to his own self-preservation. He sat most of the day in his own room, with Jamie Fleet. Don's room was less gorgeous than it used to be in Freshman year; he had learned simplicity of living, and the healthy pleasure of adapting one's self to the circumstances of one's comrades; it was a pretty, comfortable room, handsomely appointed, but of a little more studious cast. The Axminster carpet remained; but there was less bric-a-brac, the upholstery was shabbier, and there were more books.

Don sat in his pleasant room with his

sympathetic chum, and faced his first serious scrape as well as he could. Jamie was grave; it was a grave business. Jamie never went in for that sort of thing. But he did not preach to Don, or exasperate him by one "I-told-you-so." Jamie's quiet "Did n't pay, Don, did it?" meant more to Don than any keener moral rebuke that ever visited him.

"Jamie," said Don wretchedly, "if I ever get out of this, I 'll try a new track."

"Oh, I *know* you will!" cried Jamie Fleet lovingly. He looked up from his Tacitus with sad, adoring eyes, that followed Don with something finer than reproach.

"But he 'll die," groaned Don. "Calhoun will die, I know he will. I expect some of us will be hung, J. It 's just as likely to be I. I don't know," added Don desperately, "but I should *rather* be hung. I think I should *enjoy* it. If Calhoun dies, I don't see but it would be the only thing left for a fellow to do, to give himself up to the authorities. I 'll do it, if you say so, J. You 're about right, every time."

"I 'd wait awhile," said Jamie Fleet encouragingly. "Don't plan for the gallows to-day. Learn your Latin, and keep in your

room, and stay by me. You can't do better. It will steady your head."

"Bless you, J," said Don forlornly, taking up his books, "I know how a boat feels tugging at her anchor, when I sit here with you. I want to get up and go, and be into something, — but I 'm *happier* here. I really am, Jamie. But Lee will die. I am a murderer. Lee Calhoun will die. He 's just such a flat," added Don, with a spurt of his natural spirit. "Why, *I* could have made my way out of that coffin in no time. What are a few screws? It only needed a little gumption and muscle. Just like Lee!"

Lee did not die that day. He lived till morning, and despair blunted into acute anxiety. He held on two days, and the more sanguine students began easily to hope. On the third day, he showed signs of consciousness, and fifteen hundred faces in Harle College brightened. The next morning his physician pronounced him in for a clear case of brain fever, and fifteen hundred faces fell.

Now the bitterest lesson of life — the torment of prolonged suspense — set in for the hazing party.

CHAPTER VII.

A MANLY ACT.

THE students all bore the suspense of Calhoun's illness better, in a way, than Don, whose athletic strength shook beneath the strain. He paled and weakened and worried, till Jamie Fleet warned him that the faculty would need no evidence against him; his own honest face would be his unanswerable accuser. Don replied that he did n't care if it did. If he 'd got to be 'a murderer, he need n't be a cheat; and if this lasted many weeks more he should die before Lee did, and glad of it.

"Oh, brace up!" said Trouncey O'Grian. "Brace up, and square off!"

But that same day Trouncey came into the rhetoric class looking almost as pale as Don. He tossed over six settees a paper ball, which Don, snatching, unfolded, and read: —

"Faculty swooped like a wolf on the fold. Braggs and me hit for ringleaders. Shall be sat on to-night."

And, indeed, that night, at half-past eleven, Trouncey tumbled into Donald's room, and flinging himself into Fleet's empty revolving study-chair (Jamie had gone to bed), put his feet on the table, wheeled around slowly, and heavily said: —

"It 's all up, Marcy. I 'm expelled from Harle College."

"What for?" asked Don sharply, wheeling too.

"Oh, for the graveyard business."

"Nothing else?"

"They did n't mention anything else. That was the point. Buried alive; brutality, and that sort of thing."

"Did you deny it?"

"Oh, yes, yes. I said I never hit foul. I said I was n't there. Middleton said I was. Prexy advised me to own up. Said it would be better for me. I said I 'd be blanked first, for I was n't *there*. So I was expelled. That 's all."

"Anything said about me?" asked Donald thoughtfully; his handsome face, refined by the suffering of the last few weeks, showed sensitive agitation while Trouncey spoke.

"Not a word. Did n't seem to spot you.

Impression out that you were cramming for Peeker Prizes that night. Friends of yours circulated it. I 'm glad of it," added Trouncey generously. " I don't want *you* floored."

There was a silence between the two boys, which neither seemed inclined to break. Don did not even offer Trouncey a cigar, — the occasion seemed above smoking, somehow. Donald looked haggardly at Trouncey's big, good-natured, lumbering face. Its distress was the more striking because he could not remember ever to have seen Trouncey look sad before.

" My father," added the prize-fighter's son stoutly, " will knock me down. I expect he 'll *kill* me, he 'll be so mad. He thought I 'd make a scholar, turn out a respectable fellow, and that sort of thing; he said he did n't want a son of *his* in the ring. He promised my mother he 'd make a superior citizen of me, — he did really. She died five years ago. My father liked my mother. She was a good woman. Hard hit to father that I 'm such a dunce, anyhow. 'T is, really. He thought I 'd win for a purse of a thousand on rank, and that. I can't, you know, Marcy. 'T is n't in me. I expect to come out as I sailed in, — last divi-

sion, and a good way down, too. But I never thought I 'd be *expelled* from Harle," said Trouncey, with a broken voice. "My mother would have been disappointed, would n't she? Well, I can stand the licking, I guess. He can pommel me, if he wants to. But I 'm sort o' glad *she* ain't around."

"Trouncey," said Donald, in a firm voice, "you just wait here a few minutes, will you? I 've got a little errand to attend to. I 'll be back directly, and we 'll get up something hot, and talk it over. I 'll run over and get a few lemons; and I believe I 'm out of sugar."

Donald Marcy did not go for lemons and sugar; at least not just then. On the contrary, he went to the President's house; he went as straight as he could go; he ran all the way, and came panting up to the door of the official mansion, a very short-winded and heavy-hearted young man.

Yet there was a curious, delicate lightness in his soul, too, as if rudiments of wings were there, ready to fly, if they had a chance. It was an odd sensation, to which the boy was not used.

The sombre house of the President was

dark; only one light burned in it; that was in the study, and the study was an ell. The President sat in the room, hard at work. The ell had an outer door of its own, expressly for the use of the students, and Donald, without a moment's hesitation, loudly rang the bell of the study door.

The President opened it directly, with some nervousness; and, seeing who it was, he said, with the irritation of a man who feels that he has been needlessly alarmed:

"Marcy? Why, come in! What can *you* want — at this hour?"

Donald stepped into the bright, warm room, and stood among the books, which reached from floor to ceiling all about the study. At that moment nothing seemed so vivid to him as the educated life which this spot represented; the honor and the preciousness of all those intangible values which come to a man from the self-denial of thought, and toil, and gravity of purpose, and simplicity of life. His own vague young dreams of the some time when he, too, would belong to that high world which scholars know, swam before his brain dizzily. He had to collect himself, — he tried to control himself, — not to think of what

he was about to surrender forever ; he found it difficult to articulate. He looked at the President appealingly.

"Speak out, man ! " cried President Baxter, a little crossly. " What is your errand ? "

A woman's figure seemed, to Donald's excited vision, to float between his faltering purpose and the stern face of the college officer. Odd ! But the thing which steadied the boy, and gave him the grace and strength of his emergency at that moment, — the only thing that calmed his tumultuous thoughts into words, and his words into the prompt and manly ring that the President spoke of afterward, — was the image of Trouncey's mother. A pity to " disappoint " a woman, and a dead one, too !

" Sir," said Donald simply, " I 've come to own up. Don't expel O'Grian. He was n't in that graveyard scrape. I was."

When Donald got back to his room, he had lemons and sugar, and proceeded quietly to make his lemonade. Trouncey was asleep on the lounge, looking as miserable as a boy, when misery could not keep him awake, might be expected to look.

Donald waited till the lemonade was hot, and then brought some (in his toilet mug), and waked the sleeper with a little push.

"Come, Trouncey," he said gently, "here 's your lemonade. It 's piping hot. And you 're not expelled, Trouncey. I 've seen the President. It 's all right."

Trouncey O'Grian sat up sleepily and stared at Donald's excited face.

"The dickens you have! — Say! Marcy? — well. Yes. Seen the President! — Good heavens! But what in time did he say to *you?*"

"Oh, he did n't say very much," said Don quietly. "He told me the faculty would consider my case and let me know in a few days."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FACULTY'S VIEW OF IT.

HARLE COLLEGE grew no calmer when the latest developments in the hazing scrape became widely known. Calhoun was beginning to improve; the fever had abated, and signs of intelligence in the sick boy returned. His doctor ventured to give a favorable prognosis for the outcome of the illness; and the easy hope of the sanguine students bobbed to the surface gayly. College sympathy, now that the Freshman's danger had decreased, lurched over to the popular Sophomore.

Ben Braggs was expelled in good earnest; and there was no more than the usual amount of college growling at this exhibition of discipline. But Braggs was not popular. He was a rough, fast, surly fellow, who had disgraced the university in other ways than heavy hazing, before this; and he retired from the catalogue of the institution without any warmer regret than that

vague amount of class feeling which the boys thought it proper to expend upon their departed comrade.

With Donald it was another matter. Everybody liked Don Marcy too much to accept his disgrace. It was fought like a general injustice. Then he had done such a manly, honorable deed in sacrificing himself to save the prize-fighter's son; in the language of the boys, it was "such a square deal" that his immediate popularity was amazing. Instead of being the culprit of the faculty, Don was likely to become the hero of the college. This would have spoiled a vainer boy, or one with less basis of real sense in his nature. It might have hurt Don more than it did but for the sturdy, steady power of his chum, to which, in that hour of his humiliation and misery, Donald affectionately yielded.

Jamie Fleet loved Don more than all Harle College put together did or could, and Don knew it; but Jamie never flattered nor fooled him.

In this case, he told him, frankly enough, that he had gone too far; that he had done a cruel deed: "not manly," Jamie called it once; and Don, who had never heard those

iron words from anybody's lips before, winced before his gentle friend.

"Don't let the fellows gull you, Don," said Jamie Fleet. "It 's a bad business. I would n't forget that. It 's awfully nice of you to let up on Trouncey. But I don't see how you could have done less; do you, Don?"

"No," said Don mournfully. "I 'm a gentleman and a man of honor. I *had* to let up on Trouncey."

"I guess they 'll be easy on you," urged Jamie hopefully. It was impossible for him to scold Don. In his heart he felt that he would be expelled himself, if he could save his chum; he had a passionate sort of unselfish, almost feminine adoration for the gayer, more brilliant, more polished boy, who had all the qualities that he himself lacked, and who, it must be owned, lacked the best of the qualities possessed by the shy, scholarly, silent fellow who "studied for rank" and got it. But he did not tell Don his little, yearning, sensitive feeling about wanting to bear the punishment for him. Jamie hid it in his heart. Boys don't say such things. It would have embarrassed them both. He only turned his soft, dark

eyes, burning like a lamp behind a delicate shade, mutely upon his chum, and patted him upon the shoulder once or twice, and said, "Those fish-balls at breakfast must have been made of sculpins," and changed the subject — to the landlady's daughter.

In the course of the week, Donald's suspense came to an official end. The President sent for him to come to the ell study, and there he was examined by Mr. Middleton.

Don told a straight, true story, excusing nothing, and accusing nobody, withholding all names but his own, of course, as in college honor bound, but otherwise giving the history of the hazing scrape simply, honestly, and gloomily. He was very unhappy. He was prepared for the worst, and had written to his father to expect it.

"The faculty will hold another meeting to-night," observed the President, when the hearing was over. He said nothing more. He and the tutor exchanged grave and inscrutable looks. Don felt that all hope for him was over. He had a sort of scorn of pleading his own case. He asked no favor or clemency from the authorities, but sadly and silently bowed himself out of the study,

and went to his room by back streets, avoiding all the fellows.

The next morning he received the official verdict of the faculty: "*Not expelled. Suspended, and rusticated for two months.*"

This was so much better than was to be feared that Don was generally congratulated by the fellows. His class proposed to treat him to a canvas-back duck supper, which he declined, on the ground that he preferred roast peacock; and the hazing party came to his room and gave his health in cider and peanuts; which he accepted, at the cost of a headache.

Now the line of demarcation between headache and heartache is always extremely vague; and in this case it was hard to find title-deeds for the boundaries. Don was miserable in soul. Don was uncomfortable in body. He did not know which was the other. Life took on one of those fogs of heavy coloring which made it seem, for the time, unworthy of the attention of a very young person. Donald felt that his career was ended. He told Jamie Fleet that nothing remained for him to live for.

"There 's one thing; you 've forgotten it, may be," said Jamie Fleet.

"Some fellows have homes — yes," replied Don moodily. "Mine bores me. Father 's off — at Wall Street. He 's as much absorbed as a fellow in love, don't you know, — does n't notice, and that. Mother 's shut up with her nurse and her doctor. I 'm noisy. I plague the life out of her."

"I thought you had a nice home, when I went there," suggested Jamie, whose imagination or tact failed him a little just here; it was not easy for the struggling lad, reared in privations of which Donald had no intellectual comprehension, to estimate the value of mere luxury.

"Oh, there are *things* enough at our house," said Don nonchalantly; "but 't is n't *things* that make a home."

"I was n't thinking of houses, though," added his chum.

"What, then?" demanded Don, rather shortly, for him. "Let on."

"Oh, never mind," answered Jamie, shrinking, a little hurt. "Only a notion I had about people recovering themselves. Seemed to me there was something in it, — but it does n't matter. Pluck up, Don, —

do! I 'm off, now, to my old gentleman. I 'll see you later."

Jamie Fleet was working his own way through college as best he might. Whatever came up he managed to do; he tutored a Frenchman, or took care of a professor's horse, or "ran" a landlady's furnace, with equal simplicity and fidelity. It never occurred to the minister's boy that he was less of a gentleman for doing all sorts of straight, sturdy, manly work. It was characteristic of the American college that he was seldom, if ever, made to feel uncomfortable for this cause by the more fortunate fellows. Just then he was reading the evening paper to a rich, old man up town. So he went away to his client, and Don and his gloom were left together.

There is a point where depression turns into desperation so easily that one must be older than the college boy to anticipate it; and Don, before he knew it, was seized with one of those fits of immature recklessness which have about the same relation to real despair that the chicken-pox has to the small-pox.

It occurred to him that his future was blasted, that his misery was complete, and

that he must be amused directly, on peril of his reason, or something of that kind, — he was not clear what. He only had the wild, young impulse to hide thought in distraction, and so plunged in.

Feminine distraction seemed to be the natural thing. He did not care for the fellows in his discomfort and disgrace. For similar reasons, he did not feel like seeing any of what are called "very nice girls." He knew girls of various kinds. Don usually had invitations enough to spoil any young man who was less accustomed to them. There were several cards on his table that night, and he looked them over after Jamie had gone.

"Here!" he said aloud; "there 's a dance at Merry Gorond's. Just the thing. I'll go. No Prof's daughter for me *this* night!"

CHAPTER IX.

MERRY GOROND.

Miss Merry Gorond assuredly was no Professor's daughter. If a social critic had observed that she belonged to the "gay set," Miss Gorond could hardly have brought a case of slander against him. Neither would she have cared to; the term would not have troubled her; perhaps, indeed, she took a certain pride in it; such girls do.

Merry Gorond welcomed Marcy with expressive hospitality at her little dance, that night.

Her mother's parlors were full of young people; but Mrs. Gorond was not visible. Miss Merry said she had a headache, and added: "What 's the odds? Better time without old folks, don't we, Marcy? So glad to see you! Have n't seen you at a hop for a perfect age. How low you look! You need something lively. I 'll put you down for a waltz and two polkas, directly. Won't that chirk you up?"

"I am honored, I 'm sure." Donald, a graceful fellow in his evening suit, bowed low, but looked at Miss Gorond with eyes that did not smile. But his lips did. His laugh rang out heavily if not heartily. He had come to have a good time at Merry Gorond's gay house, and he meant to get it. He was surprised that it came so hard.

Merry Gorond called herself a young lady, and she meant in a careless, good-natured way, to deserve the name. But she was the kind of girl whom a fellow smokes a cigarette with, or takes too long drives with, too late, alone, on dark nights; the sort of girl whose hand a man would feel at liberty to hold without asking; and when he had got home would wish he had n't.

Miss Gorond was a handsome girl; a very handsome girl. Don remembered that he had forgotten how striking she was. She was a brilliant, blazing beauty, black of hair and eye, solid of figure, large and imposing at sight. On acquaintance, she did not seem so imposing; dignity she had none; her manners frothed over in that pert vivacity which a certain kind of girl takes for cleverness. She wore a red satin dress (a scarlet red), much a-glitter with white bead

trimmings. The music went to Donald's head like light wine; there was always good music at Merry Gorond's. He began to feel in better spirits. What a jolly place it was! Don was glad to forget everything outside of it.

She talked to him in merry snatches as they waltzed: —

"So sorry — Heard of your scrape — Mean of the faculty — *I* said it was —— Oh! Do you think that 's too tall a word? But when a girl is worked up — about a *friend* — Sus*pended?* Why, you poor fellow! You don't deserve it. Handsome, gentlemanly boy like you, — and such a dancer! So glad you came straight here to be comforted! *I 'll* cheer you up, Marcy! Awfully good friends, ain't we? Always depend on Merry Gorond! She 's your girl every time! Come into the reception-room, — do. Let 's elope out of the madding crowd. Bring me an ice and champagne, Don, that 's a good fellow."

When Donald had brought the ices, and they had eaten, and cooled, and played with the champagne, and chatted confidentially, — he was a little troubled to find how confidential he was becoming with Merry; he

did n't mean to; he had never *confided* in Merry, — the young lady suggested another glass; "she had danced too hard," she said. So they had another glass; and so they had another. And Donald told her all about the hazing scrape, for she asked, and she was very much interested in the affair; and why had he never known she was such a sympathetic girl?

It was very pleasant to be told that he was an abused fellow; that he was the victim of some sort of jealousy. Who could suspend him for a little college fun like that, without a motive? Miss Gorond was sure there was a motive. So mean of them!

"And *I 'm* so *sorry!*" added Merry tenderly. "I 'm the best friend you have, Don. I 'd do more for you than any other fellow I know."

She turned her handsome face, uplifted like a large flower; her dark eyes swam with something that looked like tears. His own head turned light and strange. Why had he never realized what a wonderful girl she was?

Somebody came into the reception-room just then and called Merry Gorond away. Don sat on, alone, for a few minutes. He felt

strangely. What had he done? He was not in the habit of kissing young ladies. The girls he liked were well-bred, and no man ever thought of taking a liberty with them. His head swam. He was giddy and bewildered.

"I 'd better go home," thought Donald, in a confused way. He glided out into the hall, found his hat, and got away without making his adieus. There was no hostess but Merry. How could he go up and shake hands with Merry? A sudden sick distaste of her filled his whole nature.

He dashed out into the cold night air, miserably, and got home as fast as he could.

When he reached his room, he heard voices. Jamie Fleet was talking to some one, — not one of the fellows. Don looked in, reluctant to be seen, he felt so unlike himself.

His father sat there before the fire, with Jamie.

CHAPTER X.

A MISERABLE BOY.

"WHY, father!" said Donald, with the accent which expresses so much surprise that it is not easy to determine how much pleasure it contains.

"Well, Donald, I thought I'd come on. What have you been up to now, anyhow? I thought it was about time I looked into it. I've got — let me see" — Mr. Marcy pulled out a three-hundred-dollar watch, at which he glanced with the nervous motion of a man who lives on a time schedule.

"Time?" asked the English gentleman who carried no watch; "what has a *gentleman* to do with time?"

But this was an American capitalist. "I have forty-five minutes and a half," said Mr. Marcy; "I must get the night express home. I've got the main facts from Fleet, here. I have saved so much time. Now speak for yourself, Donald, — no waste words, sir, — and let me understand how you

expect to get out of this. I don't like it. It is n't what I sent you to Harle for. It is n't a gentlemanly business, sir, and it is n't *business*, anyhow you fix it. It 's a bad investment. I did n't send you to college to fall short this way."

Mr. Marcy was a tall man, graceful of figure, and, excepting when under displeasure, gracious of manner. He had an alert, anxious face, care-beaten into premature wrinkles; he was not an old man, but his hair was quite gray. He shook hands with his son while he spoke, glanced at him keenly, and then stood off, with his back to the fire, and his hands under his coat-tails, moodily looking about the room. He had the manner of being already bored with the gravity of the case which had brought him away from the stock-market for twenty-four hours.

"You have a nice sort of place here," he said carelessly. "Ground-floor room, I see. There 's comfort in that. Some good prints; and you 've kept that carpet, have n't you? By the bye, your mother wished to be remembered to you."

"How is mother?" asked Don, thankful for the variation of topic. He sat down, not

too near his father, over by the window, which he opened an inch or two. He was flushed and fevered; his head blazed like a light-wood fire. He drew the curtain over the slightly opened window, and sat in the draught, drinking it in.

"Oh! she 's as usual," answered his father lightly. "Doctor there three times yesterday. It 's the same old story. — See here, you won't let me lose that train? I 've very important business on hand, and must be in Wall Street at nine o'clock to-morrow morning" —

"Even if I am expelled?" laughed Don, trying to be a little jocose. He felt the situation to be very awkward. His father had never done such a thing as this before.

"If the whole of Harle University were expelled!" replied Mr. Marcy, with a promptness which was almost startling. An expression of acute, almost ferocious anxiety settled between his brows and in his deep-set, iron-gray eyes. For the moment he seemed to have forgotten his son and his son's disgrace.

"It 's bad enough," said Don gloomily; "but it might be worse. They 've let me off pretty well, considering that Calhoun had

just a dickens of a time. I did n't *mean* any harm, father. I 'm awfully sorry for the whole affair."

"Oh, of course; that goes without saying. Thank you, — yes. Very good cigars, Don. I 'm glad to see you don't use cigarettes; there 's opium in them. But, as I was saying to Fleet, here, — if you 've got to go into rustication, I 'm going to speak to the President about it. I want you to go to Fleet's, — Dr. Fleet's, — Jamie's father. I know Fleet. He won't starve you, and he 'll treat you like a gentleman; he 'll be good for you, anyhow. Is n't it a little cold here, Donald? I 'm older than I was, Don. I begin to feel draughts. It 's a sure sign, — when a man feels draughts. Heigh-ho! I 'm tired with the trip. Close car; chilly, too. As I was saying, — at Fleet's. Vermont is a deuced hole, of course; but that 's the point, I take it. It 's only a choice of holes they 'll give you. Fleet is a good fellow. You 'd have done well, Donald, if you 'd have bespoken *him* for a father. He 'd have taken more pains with you than I have, — had more time, you know, — not always on the go, — paid you more attention. I 'm going to speak to Baxter about this; I 'll

stop there on my way to the train, and put it through. You 've made a fool of yourself, but it is n't so bad as it might be, Donald. You shall go to Fleet's. Come over here, nearer, and let me look at you. Upon my soul, you 've grown tall since I saw you. I say, Donald, there 's too much champagne in your breath. Where have you been ? "

" Calling on a young lady," replied Don uncomfortably enough.

" A young *lady ?* " repeated his father, with a short, sarcastic laugh. " The *ladies* of a college town did n't give wines to the students in my day. I must look into this, sir ! " At this uneasy moment, Jamie Fleet quietly took his books and slipped out. It was too evident that things had reached a point where father and son must be left alone.

When Jamie came back, he found that Mr. Marcy had gone.

Don was alone in the room, sitting by the table, his arm upon it, his face hidden on his elbow. He did not change his position when his chum entered. Fleet came and sat down by him, with that unfailing, almost feminine tenderness which made him so dear to Don.

"Well, Don!" he said pleasantly.

The wretched boy acknowledged his presence by a slight kick beneath the table; nothing more affectionate or articulate followed, but Jamie persisted, with that contented power to ignore rebuff which belongs to real love alone.

"Father gone? Did he get off in time?"

Donald's curly head, prone upon his fine coat-sleeve, nodded.

"Did you go to the station with him?"

Don shook his head; vigorously this time. Jamie perceived that this point was painful.

"Would n't let you, would he? I thought perhaps not. He was a good deal cut up."

"He told me to go to the deuce," cried Don, suddenly jerking his head up.

There were traces of tears on his flushed and worried face.

"He told me to go to the deuce, and be done with it. My father never spoke like that to me before. He was awfully cut up, J.! He was mortified. He felt ashamed of me. He 'd taken lots of trouble to come on."

"Could n't you make your father understand?" asked Jamie anxiously.

"Oh, I don't know," replied Don wearily. "He would n't shake hands with me when

he went away. I hated to see father off so. It went against me awfully. He did n't look well, J., seemed to me. Did you notice? I wish I could go home and see him again. But there 's this confounded rustication business."

"Don't be *too* down," pleaded Jamie.

"Oh, I am," said Don, with the cheerfulness of reviving expression. "I 'm blue as they make 'em! Why, J., I was n't drunk, — you know I was n't!"

"No, indeed," said Jamie sympathetically.

"I never got *drunk* in my life!" urged Don. "I would n't be such a flat!"

"Of course you would n't," echoed Jamie. "But, Don, — you *did* take something, you know. It is n't a good plan. It makes a fellow misunderstood. It 's best left alone."

"That 's a fact!" cried Don. "And so is a girl that will give it to you best left alone! But I won't lay the blame on Merry. I never got into such a mess. I 'm ashamed of it, too; that 's the rub. If I could play aggrieved innocent, and that — But it 's no use. I deserve it, and I 'm ashamed of myself. I never was before," added Don candidly. "I always thought I was a pretty nice sort of fellow."

CHAPTER XI.

RUSTICATED.

It was a cold December day in northerly Vermont. This is saying a cold thing. Donald Marcy was an out-of-doors boy, used to weather and able to stand it, but he had never known what cold was before. When he woke that morning, in the spare room of Dr. Fleet's parsonage, and looked about him, and took in the details that presented themselves to his shivering senses, he said: —

"The — dickens!" and took a dive under the bed-clothes, where he buried his curly head and tried to collect his congealing courage. He had been at Dr. Fleet's some weeks now, but there had never been anything as cold as this. The frost on his windows lay as thick as blue-white plush; the paper shades stirred and crackled in the wind that pierced the loose, old-fashioned casements. The straw matting, covered here and there by home-made rugs, looked glazed to his eyes, like a thin sheet of ice.

His breath froze in the bitter air whenever he dared to breathe. His pitcher, which he had been in Vermont long enough to learn to remove from the wash-stand by the window (why *are* wash-stands always set by windows in cold climates ?), stood upon the straw matting, in full view, filled to the brim with ice. His fire was out. Beside the air-tight stove the wood-box stood, half full. He filled that wood-box himself; it was expected of him; Don had never done such a thing in his life, before. He was expected to build the fire, too; there was no "sweep" at the parsonage; one little maid-of-all-work was the only visible servant.

It was a great surprise to Don that Mrs. Fleet, who was quite a lady, worked hard in her own kitchen, — harder, he sometimes thought, than the very little maid; and that the clergyman himself took care of Old William, the horse, and carried the wood and coal. Jamie did these things when he was at home. Don felt ashamed — the tough fellow! — to back out of anything that J. could do; delicate J., with his thin, studious face and untrained muscles. So, although a boarder in the minister's family, he had adopted the fashions of it without protest.

Indeed, he had a distant suspicion that the system of rustication sometimes involved little deviations of this sort from the habits of elegant young gentlemen; and it pleased Don's plucky spirit not to exhibit any astonishment or displeasure. In fact, he had accepted Vermont thoroughly; and the self-denials of the parsonage had begun to become a familiar drama in his gay, luxurious, young life.

He had found it rather "slow," it must be owned, so far, in the village of East Tipton; the parsonage was by all odds the best part of that thin old town, which lay shivering at the feet of the awful, snow-clad mountains, like a freezing creature overtaken by the winter, and trying to warm its poor life at a heart of ice. East Tipton was a place in which nothing happened. Even Jamie was not coming home for the holiday recess. Jamie had a chance to tutor his old gentleman's son, at two dollars an hour, through vacation; and a fellow must be better off than Jamie to throw away two dollars an hour. He had written home a very manly letter (he was terribly disappointed, Don could see, but he would not show it), simply saying that he must stay in Harle, and that he was lucky to get the chance.

Fay was coming home, it is true, at the holidays; but Don had never seen Fay; he did not feel an absorbing interest in the fact. He fancied her something of a blue-stocking, and not at all stylish. Don knew a plenty of what are called society girls in New York, and, of course, all sorts in Harle; but the Professor's daughters belonged to another class, as much so, in their way, as Merry Gorond herself in hers. Don had never happened to know any college girls very well; he had notions about them, as gay fellows and good dancers are apt to. He thought Fay Fleet would probably matronize him, and wear spectacles, and a "cloud," like the girls in East Tipton whom he met at the post-office giggling over the advertising board for letters that they never received, and nudging each other when the handsome boy asked for the minister's box.

Still, on the whole, Donald was not sorry that the minister's daughter was coming home that day. It would be some sort of change. Don had taken sensibly to the quiet life of the parsonage, but there was no denying that it was dull for a lively lad. Dr. Fleet put him at once hard at work, that he might keep up with his class. This was new

business for Don; six hours a day of close study, rain or shine, gay or stupid, happy or dismal, and not a scrape, not a freak, not a frolic, not a fellow to break the pull! Donald had never done any such studying as *that* in all his light, young life. He was surprised to find it really interesting at times. Dr. Fleet had a "way" with books which was to a lazy lad like the Vermont mountain wind to a case of swamp malaria.

For the rest of his days Don will remember that old parsonage study, with its shabby carpet and well-filled book-shelves, the big coal heater, noisy and black and ugly (but so much cheaper than the scholar's luxury of an open fire that it was a matter of course), the faded shades and patched lounge, and the great, hearty rush of sunlight all over the rooms on bright days; the early student-lamp with its green shade, when the afternoons were dark, and the spare figure of the minister bent over all sorts of queer, rare books in German, French, Old English, and who knows what; his refined face, with a strong brow and gentle lips, like Jamie's, starting like a medallion from a background of dark velvet, and, grown unconscious, brilliant and memorable, while he

talked to the careless lad of scholars and of scholarly thoughts and deeds and dreams.

Don had not been without his own ideas, as we have said, of that other, graver, higher life which some fellows went to college for from the start, and which he meant to stop and take along before he got through, much as he would have reined in and picked up a friend on a Saturday afternoon drive with his father's span.

In those long, lonely winter days, when he and the minister sat at their books in the pleasant parsonage study, and a man of self-denial, application, and consecration was intimately revealed for the first time to the gay boy, strange thoughts came to his mind, strange visions to his heart. Life looked to him like a puzzle, of which he had lost the key, or, perhaps, had never had it. At times he wished for it very much indeed. Dreamily and delicately as the light of the winter day came into the study, and lay upon the silent books, there stole into the lad's soul the stirring of a force which he did not know well enough to recognize, — aspiration.

There was something, too, about the life of that plain home which amazed the boy. Sometimes it touched him deeply.

Poor as the place was, harsh as the conditions of their poverty looked to the luxury-accustomed fellow, yet it sometimes seemed to him as if he had never truly felt at home before. Everything in that house, from the washing-day breakfast to the threadbare best coat of the preacher; from the cold entries to the cold mutton, was as foreign to its guest as if he had been rusticating in Zanzibar. But there was something tolerable about it all, nevertheless, — nay, something really pleasant, if you chose to think so.

Mrs. Fleet was a quiet lady, but she was the sweetest-natured one in the world. She mothered Don from the first; she petted him, and chatted with him, and cooked little dishes for him; she knew, better than the parson, how such a way of life as theirs must strike the son of T. B. Marcy; she used to visit in New York when she was a young lady; and she never fussed about little things, or found fault with Don, or nagged anybody, or made much of matters. She accepted her peaceful, narrow lot as serenely as the book did the book-shelf, and as sweetly as no one but a gentle woman can accept what is downright hard to bear. Don wondered at her very much, and he came to like her, and to like to

sit with her evenings, in the half-furnished little parlor; such a room as his mother would have refitted for her maid.

In fact, Don had adapted himself to his life in the parsonage very smoothly and good-naturedly; but Don was young, and the minister and his wife were not, and the rusticated boy shook his curls and sighed for some other young thing, if only, he said, "to wink at."

Fancy winking at Dr. Fleet! And as for the little maid, — she wore crimping-pins, and bare elbows, which she burned against the boiler, regularly, every Monday. She was the only other young creature on the place. Even the cat was old; and she had eaten her kittens.

So it was not without a certain renewed interest in life that Donald remembered, when he woke that icy December morning, that the daughter of the house was expected at the parsonage that night.

This reflection added insensibly to the motives for getting up, which were not so strong as to be beyond need of relays. It occurred to Don that he would cram a little on Xenophon that morning; he believed the Smith girls were very learned; she would

probably call him out on his Greek at once; and floor him, too. He thought he would take an early start into a liberal education, to be prepared for the worst, and so plunged out of bed. Plunge was the only word. It was like to nothing on earth so much as a dive into a bath of ice-water. Don caught his breath at the shock, and bravely attacked the air-tight stove. Now the minister's air-tight stove made a conscientious point of refusing to burn whenever the thermometer went to zero; and, as the mercury registered thirty degrees below, that balmy morning, bathing and dressing became a fine art. By the time Don had got his collar fastened with fingers so numb that he had to trust the button and the buttonhole to meet entirely on their own responsibility, and by the time he had melted his frozen tooth-brush in his mouth to brush his teeth therewith, the air-tight started up merrily. When he got down to breakfast it went red-hot; and before he had finished his omelette and griddle-cakes a smell of smoke drove the entire family flying to the guest-room, where that blazing air-tight, with an air of duty well done, was comfortably setting fire to the mantelpiece, and had consumed a copy of Xenophon and half a pile of young ladies' letters.

These incidents were a tremendous agitation in East Tipton, and Don got to the post-office that morning somewhat excited, and a little late.

It was bitingly, bitterly, brutally cold. The enormous fall of snow made running impossible, and walking an athlete's job. The snow-plows were not yet on the ground; the snow was too deep. The doctor and a man who wanted him (for a sick horse) were the only men to be seen on the streets besides the young collegian. Not a woman was visible.

Don, a fine figure in his astrachan-trimmed ulster and long rubber boots and astrachan cap, from below which his curls keeled up with a sort of defiant jollity, tramped gayly through the drifts to the office, a good hard mile away. He whistled as he went, and sang scraps of college songs, all ending: —

"Here 's to happy Harle —
Drink her down!"

Many a climate-worn, sorrow-soured woman, lank of face and lean of heart, breathed little spots in the frosted window, to see the stranger lad go by, and felt the warmer, somehow, for the sight. If she were an elderly woman, she wished she had a boy

like that, to come tramping the merry snow into her entry. If she were a young girl, she breathed a bigger hole in the thick frost-curtain, and looked a little longer, and wished — who knows what? And where do all these pretty half-grown, half-known wishes come from, or go to, that flutter across the lives of denied young people in poor places, like visitors whose very names they never know, but who bring them a breath of some brighter world, as foreign as France and as far as Paradise? And, on the whole, are they gladder or sadder for it, — who can tell?

Donald, at the post-office, romped in thunderously. The postmistress, who was the lankest, the leanest, the saddest, and the sourest of all the Tipton ladies, would have scolded any other man in the county roundly, for flooding her premises with half the snow-drift in which Don stood, radiant and dripping, taking off his hat to her, and bending before her with a bow such as was never seen in Tipton before or since. She only smiled at Don, and asked him if he would n't sit awhile by her fire and dry off, and told him he had a letter from Jamie, and one from a lady in Harle, and the minister had

two from New York, she said, and besides, there was a postal from Fay.

"She 's coming home to-day," observed the postmistress, as she handed the mail out. Don expressed no surprise at this. It was always understood in East Tipton that the postmasters, especially when they were postmistresses, read the postal cards. Fay used to write to her father in French when she had anything to say not intended for the public education. But it was found that these cards were only so much longer on the way, because the postmistress had to go home for her lexicon.

"She 's coming by the mornin' accommodation," added the postmistress. "It must be nigh due now."

"Great Scott!" cried Don, "there won't be anybody to meet her. There 's a go!"

CHAPTER XII.

FAY.

HAVING taken the postal card, which he thought, under the circumstances, he might as well share with the post-office department, Don read it carefully. It ran, in a clear, large hand, thus: —

DEAR PAPA: I shall be home Wednesday morning, by accommodation, instead of night express. Please have Old William at the station with the wagon. I shall bring my trunk. Love to all. FAY.

Old William, the parsonage horse, was so very old, and so very ecclesiastical, that no one had ever thought of calling him Billy, nor even Old Billy. That would have been a liberty far beyond the dignity of that theological animal, who was known the region round, as the postmistress said, "by his Christian name."

"Why, she *is* due!" exclaimed Don, when he had read the postal card the second time. "And Old William has n't even had

his breakfast. There 's a drift ten feet high before the barn. We 've got to dig him out. Why — let me see — that train must be *in!* Don't I hear it whistle? Her father does n't know she 's coming so early. I guess I 'll have to go over and meet her."

"What good 'll that dew?" asked the postmistress. "It 's a good three mile from the depot to her house. A girl can't drabble herself up that way with her best gown on. Not but what Fay could walk it; she 's broughten up like the rest of us round here; but then, she can't afford to spile that blue flannel of hern; it 's new this term. Why don't you go over to Jarsper's and hire a hoss and meet her? She 's set out already, — make your mind on that. She ain't the girl to sot in a depot a-waitin' for no men-folks."

Fortified by this suggestion, which seemed to serve as a sort of chaperon to his own eager wish to do something hospitable in the exigency, Don ran over to "Jarsper's," the neighboring stable, and quickly got out the only hack in town, — a ragged vehicle on runners, which swayed through the big drifts like a little sloop-yacht in a nor'easter. Don had vigorously helped Mr. Jasper to har-

ness, and he vociferously helped him to drive; and owing to these two facts the sleigh came in sight of the young lady before she had reached home. She was, in fact, not more than a quarter of a mile from the station when The Hack met her and halted with great ceremony. Mr. "Jarsper" felt this to be an event in his life. Fay never rode in The Hack, not even at Tipton funerals. It was always reserved (there being but one) for the chief mourners.

Don leaped from the box and stood before the young lady, cap in hand, his brown curls blowing madly in the winter wind, his handsome face drawn to the precise Greek expression which he thought would be expected of him by the college girl. He had just stuffed into his pocket the letter from Harle. It was from Merry Gorond, who often wrote to him, — Heaven knew why! Certainly not because she had been invited to.

Fay was trudging along stoutly enough. She was a strong, well-developed, eager girl, in a blue flannel suit, with dark blue waterproof cloak thrown over it, and her skirts tucked up. They were pinned in a little bunch in front, and she carried her leather

hand-bag, held over them to keep them down. She wore a dark blue hat of felt with plain velvet trimmings, and a saucy little white veil. There was not so much Greek expression about her as Don had anticipated. He was conscious of feeling quite puzzled for a moment.

"Excuse me, Miss Fleet," he began, with his best bow, "but I" —

Fay had been walking with her head bent, the better to pick her way through the two-feet fall of unbroken snow, and when she saw The Hack, and the elegant young stranger perched thereon beside Mr. "Jarsper," she lifted her face and looked straight at him with a perfectly unconscious, pretty look of girlish amazement, at once so modest and so straightforward that it was bewitching.

"I don't know who you are," said the young lady sedately, but her eyes — she had beautiful eyes — twinkled. She and Don looked at each other for a moment, and then Don laughed. The young lady's lip twitched, then curved into a merry smile. "Are you anybody in particular?" she ventured.

"I 'm a rusticated college boy from Harle. I used to be your brother's chum,

and I 'm now your father's guest. My name is Marcy, at your service. I came to drive you home."

"Oh!" cried Fay delightedly. "How nice of you. I *am* pretty wet."

Don helped the girl into The Hack gallantly, and, seating himself beside her, drew the doors and windows close, and ordered Mr. Jasper to drive to the parsonage with an authority to which The Hack was quite unused. Mr. Jasper resented it by driving as slowly as he possibly could all the way, which Don did not mind in the least. Really, if the truth must be told, the young lady did not herself seem oppressed by the length of the journey.

They began at once, and chattered like two magpies all the way.

"How did you happen to get — Where *is* Old William?" began Fay at once. "Father ought not to have af—"

She had begun to remember the unprecedented expense of The Hack, but checked herself before the stranger lad. She felt instantly that this fur-clad, luxurious fellow could not understand her little daughterly anxiety about a trifle so small to him, so serious to the minister's struggling family.

So Donald hastened to explain the circumstance about the postal card, and how he happened to venture to take upon himself the honor, etc., etc.; and The Hack, if she would allow him, was his own affair. He had got to have it, Don said, to get home himself; he was, in fact, very wet, and had had enough of it.

"You did n't catch me walking home *this* morning," explained Don boldly, "and it was awfully jolly it happened so. I only had to turn about and get you. Are n't you awfully wet?"

Fay gave him a little, dark, grateful look; her face flushed slightly; she did not pursue the subject of The Hack. For a moment she did not talk of anything; and then she said abruptly: —

"Yes. Soaked. I 've only got rubbers and gaiters. My rubber boots are at home. But I don't mind. I shall change them when I get home. A little drenching never hurts *me*. *I* can stand it."

"The mischief you can!" retorted Don. "You 've caught me there."

The two young things looked at each other with eyes full of pretty defiance, and then both broke into a merry laugh.

"I thought you 'd begin to talk about the Anabasis directly," said Don confidentially.

"And I never thought about *you* at all," said Fay saucily.

"I 'm awfully glad you 've come," pursued Don nonchalantly, waiving this thrust. "With your permission, I 'll make you think about me now you 've got here."

"I have a great deal to do," urged Fay. "I brought three novels and a new nocturne home, and a new dress to make."

"I 'll help," persisted Don. "I 'm a first-rate dressmaker."

"Dear me!" said Fay. "Do you fit well? Can you make a fifty-cent serge look like a dollar-and-a-half drap d'été? Do you think you could if you *had* to?"

"Here 's your pa," called Mr. Jasper, hammering on the front glass with the butt end of his whip. "The minister 's comin' to meet The Hack."

CHAPTER XIII.

FRIENDSHIP ON A TOBOGGAN.

LIFE at the parsonage in East Tipton now turned over a fairy leaf. New heavens and a new earth opened forthwith for the rusticated boy. Who would have believed that one little girl could so quickly and quietly revolutionize a family, a house, a heart?

Fay had not been at home a day before that entire home took on, like a holiday ribbon, the color of the bright, strong individuality belonging to the daughter of the house. Her mother smiled, and dressed and rested. Fay was here.

"Yes, my dear, I *am* a little tired; but don't begin to do the dishes too soon. Get over your journey first."

Her father stayed out of his study two hours after dinner. Fay had come. He sat in his dressing-gown, laughing at college stories.

"Your girls' stories," he said, "with the fun, and without the devil."

The little kitchen-maid took her hair out of her crimping-pins before dinner, and drew her sleeve over her burned elbow, and wildly put on a white apron, and tripped over the soup tureen and sat down hard on the pieces. Miss Fay was home. The cannibal cat, who had eaten her kittens, came in with an air of high moral virtue, and mounted solemnly to Fay's lap to be chucked under the chin, — a liberty which she allowed to no one but Fay. Old William, when the ten-feet drift was cut through, walked rheumatically out of the barn and limped to the kitchen window for sugar when he heard Fay's voice. Even the dinner-table went mad for Fay's sake, and struck out into Christmas epicureanism before its time. They had turkey and cranberry sauce, and the white potato was strained through a colander, and there were nuts and raisins after the pumpkin pies; and the little maid brought coffee, and spilled it and scalded the cat with it, and told her it was good enough for her; she wished she 'd "murthered" her. And it was a very exciting occasion.

As for Donald, in one hour he did not understand how he had ever lived in East

Tipton without Fay, and not "struck" for his reason and his life.

Fay was a healthy, happy, rousing, singing, sensible girl. She laughed whenever she thought of it, and she thought of it very often. She ran up and down stairs, I can't say like a fawn, for she was a solid girl, but like a graceful collie that finds it work to keep still and play to keep going. She bounded in and out and flashed to and fro across those plain, poor parsonage rooms like the prisms in the rainbow-glass that she had brought home for a holiday present for her mother. And who ever knew that Fay went without silk mittens, such as the other girls had, and wore a cheap pair of woolen ones all winter, to get that prism? "Poor mother had so few pretty colors in her life!" Fay said. And to Donald she added, in the pleasant, instinctive confidence which grows so quickly between two young people who like each other from the start: —

"I thought it would be nice to see *something* dance in this house, if it 's only a rainbow; don't you? See them! Are n't they dear, — waltzing all over that ugly wall-paper, and polkaing across mamma's cap-strings? And just look, — one is perform-

ing a *pas seul* on papa's nose! It 's a blue one, too; a regular last-act, blue-devil color. But he would n't recognize it. He never goes to the play."

"Do you?" asked Don.

"I like to," she said quickly. "But I don't go unless he says I may. Besides, I can't afford it, you know. But I went a few times Freshman year. I was visiting a chum of mine in New York."

"What are you now?" asked Don anxiously. "A Senior?"

"Only a Junior," nodded Fay. "I 'm only a year ahead of you. I should be a Senior, but I had to stay out a year."

"Dropped?" asked Don.

"Do I look like it?" returned Fay, turning sharply about and facing the mischief in his eyes. She stood straight and still before him; a fine figure of a girl, with a face handsome this minute, plain the next, winning now, rebuffing then, melting with innocent coquetry while you looked at her, and withdrawn into delicate dignity before you could speak to her; a creature full of the whims of youth and the second thought of maturity; bubbling with fun and controlled with resolve; a girl made up of mischief and

good sense, of frolic and modesty; a gymnast and a musician, a dancer and a mathematician, a romp and a scholar, — that was Fay.

"You look," said Don, with a low bow, "as if the faculty of Smith might have had their hands full with you" —

Fay's delicate eyebrows arched disdainfully.

"But did n't," finished Don. "They did n't. You thought you would n't. I 'm afraid you 've been the other kind of girl. I 'm afraid you 've learned your lessons and stood well, and all that."

"And why, sir, do you suffer from fear on this account?"

"Because *I* have n't," said Don ruefully. "I see you 're a scholar. It runs in your family. I 'm not. I 'm rusticated for a hazing scrape."

"Dear me!" said Fay, lifting her black eyes with the innocence of a baby. "Are you stupid?"

Don flushed; he certainly did; when had a girl's tongue made Don blush before?

"I 'm sorry for you," pursued Fay blandly. "It must be very uncomfortable. I 've always thought that would be the hard-

est thing, — not to be clever; not to be able to learn things, like other people."

"I don't know that I 'm a born *fool!*" exploded Don viciously.

"Oh! are n't you? Did n't you mean that? I'm so relieved! I thought — I supposed — I did n't know but you meant — Then why in the world," demanded Fay vigorously, "don't you learn your lessons? Why on earth do you *act* like one?"

"One what?"

"It was your own word, sir! Don't make *me* use it. Don't compel me to be rude. I don't like those pert girls. I don't think it 's good manners to be vicious, do you? I 'm afraid I 've gone too far. Have I been impolite? I did n't mean to be. Shall I beg your pardon?"

Fay's voice melted into such gentleness when she said this, that Don's smarting vanity went under, and he bowed before her.

He thought her adorable, and he thought he would tell her so; but something in Fay's fine, far eyes checked him. She was n't the girl one could make love to at two days' acquaintance. The expression of Don's face changed as gently almost as her own.

"No," he said humbly, "don't beg my pardon. I deserved it. I 'm a harum-scarum chap. But I 'm not a *bad* fellow, Miss Fay," he added earnestly. He began to feel that he wished very much to stand well with Fay, in her modest, womanly thoughts of him; he could not bear it that she should believe him worse than he was.

"Oh, I know *that!*" said Fay eagerly. "I 'll tell you," she hurried on, for her tact told her that she had gone far enough into a painful subject, — "I 'll tell you why I was out for a year. I 'm not ashamed of it. I had to earn my way that year. Jamie was sick, and needed every cent. So I took my turn. That was all right. You see" — the girl hesitated, looking timidly at the young stranger, so soon a friend — "they do have a hard time of it here, poor dears, — two of us in college at once. That 's the worst of it. But it won't last long. Then I shall teach, and send them — O-*ooh!*" cried Fay, as girlishly as if she had never been to college. "I lie awake nights thinking of the things I 'm going to send them. I 've made out a list. It 's four pages and a half long already!"

"What did you do," asked Don, with

unwonted seriousness, "to earn money? *I* never earned more than fifty dollars in my life. Father gave me that once for knocking off cigarettes."

"Oh, I taught music," said Fay carelessly; "I 'm not a player, but I 'm accurate, and I can get classes. I learned pretty thoroughly what I do know. Then sometimes I take a school for a term. That helps. I don't mind hard work, I think," urged Fay meditatively; "I *like* it. Don't you?"

"I begin to think I might be made to," replied Don forlornly, "if I took a few quarters' lessons in How to Do It from a girl like you."

Fay looked at him; she looked at him very soberly indeed, but so charmingly that Don hoped she would say something half as sweet as her look. But Fay said nothing at all.

Fay never "preached" to him, from first to last. But from the beginning until the end she gave the boy something better than advice, and rebuke, and retort.

She flashed over the panorama of his young life the ideal of a strong, sweet girl, educated and womanly, intellectual and ten-

der, and true, *true* to the last drop of her heart's blood. Fay Fleet had her faults, but she never posed, she never tricked, she did not manage. No young man could say that Fay flirted, even when there was nothing else to do. It was almost as hard to say whether she liked a fellow, or not, very much, — that is, whether one were important to her in any way. Don could not tell for the life of him. Girls had always liked Don quite easily enough. Without undue emphasis of the fact, the handsome boy had always had reason to suppose that a girl's interest was a thing to be lightly won, or indeed, that need not be won at all; it came as a matter of course. With Fay it was quite different, but he could not have told why, though he speculated upon it a great deal.

When Fay had been at home a week, he said to himself, one day: —

"I 've got it. It 's because she has something else than fellows to think about."

"You care," he said to her, "you really do care for what you are up to, — college and all that. It gives you thoughts. It takes your time."

"I want to *be* something," said Fay dreamily. "That 's all I know about it. I am always very busy."

"You *are* something," replied Don, in a low tone. "That 's the point of it. You 're the nicest, the — the — loveliest — Miss Fay, you are the *best* girl I ever knew! Don't be mad at me," pleaded Don, when he saw her pretty blush. "I mean it all right. I don't mean to be silly. I 've known most kinds. If you 'd seen some of the kinds I have known — I wish," he urged, with a sort of eager earnestness so new to Don Marcy that it seemed to soften and envelop him in a beautiful, gentle color, as the blush did the little woman, — "I wish I could be a different kind of fellow, — the kind — well, *your* kind," he explained candidly, turning to look straight at her.

"Do you *really?*" asked Fay softly.

"I 'm very unhappy," replied Don; "I never said so before. I 'm not satisfied with the way I 'm going on. I wish I were the other kind of boy."

"Then *be* the other kind!" cried Fay, in her rich, ringing voice.

They were going out tobogganing, when this conversation occurred. Don, who was used to satisfy every whim that money could supply, took the toboggan fever when the heavy snow packed down upon the mountain-

sides, and if there were no toboggan in the village, why not send to New York for one? So he sent to New York for the toboggan. This was the first time that he and Fay had gone together for a long slide; he had experimented by himself upon his new-bought toy, to make sure of its safety and his own skill, and so on, before he trusted Fay upon it. But now they were well on their way across the wide, snow-blind fields, to give the Vermont girl her first toboggan slide; they both wore snow-shoes (for the snow "slumped" occasionally, and was very deep), and Fay had extemporized some sort of a costume for the occasion; she could not afford a toboggan-suit, of course, but she had constructed something out of her gymnasium suit and an old red blanket, in which, with a red flannel cap and cheap red mittens, she was altogether charming. Her cheeks were flushed with the fine exercise, and her black eyes and hair seemed to snap, electrically, in the frosty sunshine. When she said, "*Be* the other kind!" she turned her bright, round face up to Don in a way peculiar to herself. Some girls make that feminine motion of the head — everybody knows it — with a kind of helplessness, a leaning toward

a young man, a clinging to him, as if the whole nature fell, a pretty burden, upon his own, for support, protection, and caressing care. This is sometimes interesting to a boy for a moment's play. It becomes tiresome, girls, believe me, to a man, for a life's work. Fay had an attitude of stirring and yet of gentle independence and strength of her own, which Don found delightful. She looked like the very soul and sense of the wholesome, heartsome winter day. All the best of the gay boy's nature sprang gravely to meet the effect which she had upon him.

"Will you be my friend, — true blue, — my faithful friend, if *I* turn out the other kind?" he asked her very soberly.

Fay hesitated.

"If I say I will, I *shall*, you know," she said, with a little, serious nod. "I never said that — before — to anybody, — to any boy, I mean!"

"But you 'll say it to *me?*" pleaded handsome Don. "I never asked it before, either. I 've done my share of flirting, and carrying on, I dare say. But I never wanted a girl to be my *friend* before."

"It 's a solemn sort of word," said Fay, in a low voice.

"We 're agreed on that," replied Donald proudly. "I have n't wasted it, nor blasphemed it, you know; I never felt like slinging it round on lots of people."

"That goes a good way, with me," said Fay.

"I mean," pursued Don, with an argumentative and original air, as if he were the first boy who had ever talked friendship to a girl in all the history of the old, dear, foolish world, "I want you to help me, to stand by me, to keep step with me, you know, as we do this minute; good, strong, long steps; and stimulate me, and make me think of different things, and make a better fellow of me, — in earnest, Miss Fay. I want it very much indeed."

"You won't let me be ashamed of you," suggested Fay gently, "if I do that?"

"There 's my hand on it," said Don. He looked at her eagerly. Aspiration, born in his soul in that simple, studious country home, had lain a helpless, half-formed thing, waiting for the strong touch of resolve to nurse it into manly life. The girl had given the touch; delicate and firm, and womanly as herself.

She held out her red mitten. Don took it

into his sealskin glove. After an instant's hesitation he removed his glove; his eyes deferentially said: May I? He drew off the woolen mitten, and their hands clasped.

Neither of them spoke for a moment. Then Fay put on her mitten and said: —

"Are we going straight down the side of Mount Tipton?"

"I 'll go anywhere you take me!" rapturously.

"I won't do anything so *steep* as that, sir!" demurely.

"Is n't there a *little* mountain anywhere we might go down?" asked Don. "I don't feel as if a hill were big enough for the occasion. How 's that one, over there?"

It was instinctively understood between them that there was nothing more to be said about friendship just now. They abandoned themselves to the higher education of the toboggan, as utterly as if they had been ten years old.

Fay thought there was a little mountain, — "Small Tom" was its name, — across a few more pastures and over the creek, and she thought there was a pretty fair clearing down an obtuse angle over beyond those pines, where it would be safe enough to get

down, if he understood his vehicle. Don was sure that he knew his toboggan intimately; and they set out to climb Small Tom forthwith; their peals of laughter when Fay's feet went through the snow, or Don tripped up, or the toboggan "struck," echoing down the white hillside, with a ring that brought several of the lank, lean matrons in the scattering farmhouses to breathe on their frosted windows and look through at the tobogganers. But the farmers' daughters made quite big holes in the frost, to watch the young climbers, and one took the skin off from her tongue, and her mother made her gargle alum and water for the rest of the day.

Fay found a slide that was to her mind; there had been some coasting on it a few days ago, and it was broken in, a little. Still, it was a long, dizzy, diving road to take, and the two young people looked it over cautiously before they sat down.

"I think, by steering carefully *there* — and avoiding those stumps — and putting down brakes *there*, we can make it, don't you, Miss Fay?" said Don eagerly.

"I rather think so," said Fay, calculating the pitch with her trained eyes. "I 've

coasted here forty times on a common sled. We call it a little too steep for bobs."

"Oh, a toboggan is ever so much safer than a bob," explained Don confidently.

"All right," nodded Fay. "Go ahead. I'm not afraid, if you're not."

He started slowly. How delightful was the toboggan! Fay held on tight, and laughed out like a little girl. They began to move — to start — to skim — to plunge — to fly. Small Tom was a very small mountain, but a very big hill. He reared his humped side like a rocking camel, and that toboggan, once under way, went down like madness. It was all done in who knew how few moments? A whirr — a whizz — a dive — a flash, — and something had happened. Somewhere, a sunken stump had snagged, or Small Tom's crust had yielded, — they never knew just what was the matter; but there was a crash, a bump, stars, darkness, pain, and snow in the throat, and — oh, who was hurt?

Don crawled to his feet, where he lay sprawling under the wreck of his expensive toboggan. His wrists were cut and his foot bruised, and so on; little hurts; not worth speaking of; but Fay, — Fay lay quite still

on the snow. Blood flowed from her head. She did not cry out, nor speak.

With a horrible sinking at his heart, Donald got to her, and got her up from the snow in a sitting position, and held her against his arm, and called her name desperately. He had not the least idea what to do. All the girls in the world whom he had ever heard of in such cases sprained their ankles. He could have managed *that;* a long course of fictitious reading had taught him that he must carry the young lady in his arms all the way to the nearest farmhouse. But a wound in the head, a bleeding and unconscious girl, — this was another thing. In despair, he took his handkerchief and began clumsily to bind up the cut in Fay's poor head.

"That is n't the way," said a low voice distinctly. "Put it *so*, please."

With that, Fay held up her head, as straight as she could, and moved a little away from his arm.

"I 've come to. *I'll* fix it. Don't be scared. I 'm not killed, Mr. Don. I 've got a bad bump, — but that 's all."

"What *shall* we do?" cried Don in distress. "How will you ever get home?

You 're not fit to tramp down this blamed mountain. Won't you let me carry you — somehow ? "

" Dear, no ! " Fay sat straighter, and began to laugh. " I 'm a heavy girl. I should break your back."

" I 'm used to tossing Freshmen — in blankets," urged Don.

" I 'm a Junior," retorted Fay ; " I 've got past that. You just help me a little till I don't feel so dizzy, and I 'll get down to Joe Jouncey's, — that first farmhouse. It 's the one where the girl peeked through the window. They 'll let me have their old Lamentations, — he 's the horse. I 'm all right, only a little achy and shaky, and I *am* cut some. But it 's nothing much. Don't look so ! " entreated Fay.

Perhaps Don was not to be blamed for looking anyhow, just then. He never had felt, in all his life, what he felt in that long, cold, hard descent of Small Tom, with Fay, bleeding and white, plucky and silent, shaken from all her pretty little independence, and leaning on his arm heavily, because she simply could not move alone.

" I 'm not much hurt," she assured him from time to time ; " I shall be all right in a day or two."

But Don's heart was wrung within him. He looked at her speechlessly. He longed so to carry her, to hold her, to comfort her, that he did not know how to keep his arms off from her.

But Fay's sweet eyes dropped before his own. In spite of her pain and her pallor, she faintly and appealingly blushed. Donald set his teeth, and looked away from her across the blinding, blurring fields of snow.

Alone there, a mile from a human eye, upon the mountain-side, with a faint and wounded girl, the young man would not so much as have pressed his lips upon her hand, nor touched her with the lightest touch which she was brave and sturdy enough to manage to do without. Solitude, sympathy, suffering, gave him no little momentary freedom of that sort with Fay. He *could* not. Fay was not that kind of girl. He felt that he was not now that kind of boy.

So, silently and sacredly, the two young people got down the mountain-side. They went straight to Joe Jouncey's, where the lean woman recommended alum-water for Fay, and the girl with the skin off her tongue brought bandages for Don, and Lamenta-

tions was put into the sleigh, and took the minister's daughter home, where she was very plucky and sweet till she got well; and Don felt as if she had been nearer to him than she would ever be again, and was quite sad about it, but comforted himself in taking care of her and making many steps to wait upon her, and in ordering Mr. Jasper to drive over to Tipton immediately, and never to return alive until he had found a florist and violets.

When Mr. Jasper returned with no violets, but proudly carrying three pink rosebuds, eight scarlet geraniums, and a quart of smilax, he brought a letter for Don. The letter was from Merry Gorond. Donald put that letter in the air-tight stove and lighted his fire with it. He did not even break Miss Merry's elaborate emerald seal.

A girl like that seemed as far away from his life now, as the shouts of a New York hackman from the hymns sung at the old parsonage piano on Sunday night, when Fay played softly, her pure face lighted with a feeling which the young man felt that he was not fit to understand. Fay was a religious girl, but she did not talk to Don about that. She was afraid of "preaching" to

him, as we have said before. But Don understood that she believed in holy things, and tried to live as such believers do. He began to wish to be religious himself; and meant to ask her, some time, to teach him how.

CHAPTER XIV.

OVERBOARD.

It was a lovely day in May, of Don Marcy's Junior year. Harle harbor tossed to the tune of a stiff breeze. The waves had the cold, repellent, blue color which strikes the water in a late spring. It gave some of the boys the shivers to look at it; but they did not say so. It was "the thing" to make light of all such points. Outside of the bar the "white-caps" began to nod irritably. In fact, there was quite a sea.

As one stood on the promontory that day, looking inward to the decorous university town, and outward to the lawless surf, bracing forward to keep one's hat on, beaten by the chilly wind, and blinded by the blazing water, one would not have felt irresistibly drawn toward "life on the ocean wave." Unless one were very young and very excitable, or very *au fait* in the life of Harle, one would have experienced some surprise at seeing, a mile away, the long, slender,

sharp outline of a college shell piercing the rough water-line, and making straight for the bay.

One of these crazy little crafts led, by a boat's length, an eight-oared paper wherry, and piloted it toward the bar with as much composure as if the harbor had been a pan of rising cream. This shell belonged to the captain, and the larger boat was manned by the Junior crew. They were practicing for the regatta, to be rowed with a great rival university in midsummer. Marcy had put a Senior at the stroke, and had taken to a single-scull so as to see how the crew looked, to criticise, and to perfect their form as much as possible.

There had been some difference of opinion about the condition of the water that Saturday afternoon. Some of the crew thought it a little too choppy for practicing, for, as is well known, the shell is a boat not adapted to surf rowing. But on the crew there were several fellows of the sort who always think a thing can be done anyhow, and who are incapable of personal fear, especially in nautical concerns. Trouncey O'Grian was one of these, and the captain of the Junior crew, who, as we have said, was no other than Donald Marcy, was another.

Some students on the banks, representing the class-spirit so universal in college, looked on with vigorous applause and Indian yells and calls; thus supplying the element of the spectator, which is so necessary to give the zest to, and which so often causes the blunder in, a venturous deed. The Freshmen applauded the Junior crew, which the Seniors and Sophomores criticised at their pleasure. Such, in the main, was the turn of sympathy; but as several of these skilled oarsmen were on the "'varsity" crew, the interest was more divided than it would otherwise have been.

Among the Sophomores, Lee Calhoun's tall figure sauntered easily. He had lost most of the swagger with which he had ornamented Freshman year and Harle society, and was becoming like other fellows. His tremendous hazing experience had obviously changed either the current of college feeling toward Calhoun, or else the boy himself, it was difficult to say which; perhaps both results had occurred, and each had acted and reacted on the other. When he recovered from his terrible illness, Lee Calhoun found it novel and agreeable to receive the sympathy of the fellows; which they in

turn liked him none the less for their having given to him. Perhaps a certain college honor sprang up in his case, an instinct to make amends for his hard luck. Perhaps Lee, who was never to be outdone in any species of personal pride which he comprehended, took it to be the plucky thing to ignore the past and bury the hatchet. His father had come on and hotly informed President Baxter that he must withdraw his son from Harle University, but Lee himself, when he got well, insisted on remaining.

"Would you have a son of yours *hazed out* of a *Northern college?*" he demanded. "As a man of spirit, — and a gentleman, — I've *got* to stay."

Soon after Donald Marcy's return from his rustication in Vermont, an interview had taken place between himself and Calhoun, the particulars of which were never made known to the college. It was of Marcy's seeking (though it was said to be of Jamie Fleet's instigating), but it was certain, whatever took place, that Calhoun received his hazor courteously, and that the two boys remained on civil terms during the rest of Don's college career. It is perhaps unnecessary to say that they never became what

could be called intimate. But, at least, they always atoned for any radical deficiency in their personal relations by that excessive politeness which is so convenient a substitute for affection in human affairs.

Great things were expected of Harle that year. Bets on the regatta went heavily in her favor, already, at this early day. Her Junior crew was her particular glory. This crew had challenged the Juniors of the other great New England university to a contest, to take place irrespective of the intercollegiate races. Indeed, so much confidence was placed in the Junior members of the university crew that an international challenge to an undergraduate crew of an English university was actually proposed in Harle, if never definitely put in motion.

All this was tremendously exciting. The boys talked boat from Monday morning till Saturday night. Don Marcy went wild with the rest. It was generally held to be unfortunate that Marcy was competing for the great De Courtney prize, — the most important prize in Harle College; a thing whose value is well known in all collegiate circles; the honor which decides a man to be the best writer and speaker in his class, and whose

literary and oratorical rank follows him some distance into the real life which succeeds college play. Nobody had expected that Marcy, the captain of the distinguished Junior crew, whose fame he had done more than any other man to create, would disturb the nautical glory of the university by attention to any of those trifling scholastic honors which were reserved for less muscular and more studious men. It was quite a shock to Harle when Don came home from Vermont in Sophomore year, and, in college phrase, "swore off on bumming," took to his books, went to recitation, doubled his electives, was thought to cultivate designs on the scholarly Senior society, wrote one or two themes that had received the approval of the Professors, brushed up his naturally fine elocution, and was even suspected of studying for rank.

That these things interfered seriously with the interests of any college crew was well known. It was thought to be a great pity that the happy-go-lucky, handsome, graceful fellow, one of the best oarsmen in Harle College, should have his mind diverted by the trifles of the recitation-room and the platform. Few of the boys (and as for those few, who listened to them ?), a very few, said: —

"Too bad that a fellow who has a chance for the De Courtney should be mixed up with racing."

But the groups on the banks on practicing days said only: —

"What a shame that the captain should be bothered by the De Courtney!"

On this particular Saturday afternoon, Don was very happy. He had worked hard all the week, and felt that he had earned his play even by that supernaturally high standard of diligence which it had become his pleasure to cultivate of late.

A certain little lady, with the scholar in her brows and the romp in her eyes, had never seen fit entirely to discourage Don's nautical tastes; she was too good an oarswoman herself; secretly, she was rather proud of his rowing. In the spring vacation of Sophomore year, she had stopped over a day at Harle to see her brother, and Don took her out on the bay. Fay viewed his stroke critically.

"You 'll be captain of the Junior crew," she said, when they landed. "You 'll row at the regatta."

"By your permission?" asked Don with a courtly bow, so low that it hid the gentle

look in his eyes which waited obedient on the lightest wish of a girl who thought so little about her power upon him that she never tried to use it, and, by her sweet unconsciousness, increased its force tenfold.

"On one condition," nodded Fay, springing from the boat without the help of the young man's hand.

"That is?"

"The De Courtney prize," said Fay.

"The *De Courtney?*" gasped Don. "Why, that is — I mean — why, I 'd rather have it than the valedictory."

"You could n't have that, anyhow," responded Fay; "Jamie will get that. Everybody says so."

"Of course he will," said Don. "But he *can*. I *could n't* get the De Courtney."

"And, pray, why not?" demanded Fay.

"Why, I never thought of it!" said truthful Donald.

From that hour it might be almost said that he thought of nothing else. There was no doubt about it either among the fellows or the faculty. Marcy had "gone in" for the De Courtney prize.

He had forgotten it, though, that rough afternoon, — he had to forget it. No man

could take a shell across Harle harbor that day and not give soul and body to the shell. Don's color was high, his rowing cap pushed far back upon his bright curls, his keen, young eye pinioned to the reefs and buoys that lined the track, his finely developed arm steady at the stroke, the muscles starting on his straight, broad back, — what a handsome lad! Even the fellows felt it. Even Calhoun on the bank, tossing his cigar, said idly: —

"Well-built chap — Marcy."

The group upon the bank followed the crew with more than usual interest. There certainly was sea enough to make it exciting. The shells cut the water daintily. The waves splashed over them playfully to begin with, then in good earnest. The captain now piloted them, and now drew back, and good-naturedly but keenly criticised the various attitudes and strokes. The crew responded to him in splendid style. It was a daring venture. No other crew, not even the university crew, would have dared go out in such water. The boldness of the thing excited the admiration even of rival classes.

The hurrahs of the boys upon the bank resounded through the merry air. The very

sun seemed to lie upon the water like a warship, and to move swiftly and silently along with the boys, as if he had gone off his dignity and stopped to practice with the other boats.

There the town lay, slipping rapidly behind them. Beyond, the bar dashed white, and the sea called loudly.

"Can't make it," said Trouncey. "No water for us beyond that bar, captain."

"Wait your orders," laughed the captain. "I don't propose to drown you. We'll turn to leeward and spurt back. About, there! About! Don't you *hear?* About, I say!"

With this, Donald gave a mighty stroke, and the frail shell whirled madly into the teeth of the wind.

A cry started from the crew. Another rang from the spectators on the bank.

"The captain! The captain! Marcy's overboard! It's the captain's boat!"

The single shell had gone over; the wind had caught it broadside; the waves had overturned it; Donald was in the water.

Now the water was very cold. The wind had risen; the sea with it. Upon such a sea as now tossed around the venturesome crew,

nobody would have thought of starting; but they were "in for it." The captain, of course, was a swimmer, but they were a good quarter of a mile from shore. It was seen in a very few moments that Donald was chilled through, and that he kept himself upon the surface weakly. He made for the shore at first; then seemed to waver, weaken, and turn.

Often a tender accompanies the crews, rowed by a relief, in view of possible accident. But in this case none was on duty. The situation was really very serious for Don. He had begun to have blind and sober thoughts, — of his father, of dying, of Fay; a flash of many startling dreams and memories, and of strangling fear. Under these wilder visions ran a sense of mortification that the captain of the Junior crew should drown himself, and alongside of the whole medley one steady, matter-of-fact thought:

"If the cramp takes me, I 'm a goner."

"Great God!" cried Don suddenly, "I 've given out. I 'm too cold. I 'm going down."

The roar of the water in his ears took on a strange, sweet tone, — like a girl singing, Sunday night, in a peaceful home. If ever the boy heard her in the world, he heard

Fay at that moment. What was it? Something about Jesus, the lover of her soul: —

"*When the billows o'er me roll.*"

Then it was that he felt his arm seized by a mighty grasp. He knew that clutch. Who in all Harle could mistake it? Nobody but Trouncey O'Grian could grip a man like that.

To say that the Junior crew were paralyzed when they saw Marcy disappear would be putting it mildly. Were it not for the superior weight and buoyancy of their craft and their presence of mind when the gust struck them abeam, they, too, would have gone under. A wild thought swept through Trouncey O'Grian's whirling brain. Donald must be saved at any cost; he would be the man to do it. The feat which he now performed is yet talked of in Harle College.

"My God, boys!" came from his sternly-set lips. His voice hissed like a musket-ball through the storm. "Rest on your oars. Balance for your lives! Steady! Don't mind the water, or you 're goners. *I've got to jump!*"

He had let his oar drift aside. Dexter-

ously he had slipped his feet from the straps, and without so much as letting a teaspoonful of water in the shell, already half-swamped, the trained athlete had jumped in the air, and landed in the water.

"O Trouncey!" gasped Don reproachfully. "God bless you!" he spluttered tenderly.

But Trouncey O'Grian said nothing. Holding the exhausted boy with his tremendous clasp, he set out mightily for shore. He wasted no breath in words. Donald felt that they were making headway, — but that he was very cold; the blackness settled in between them and the shore.

"You — can't — do it, Trouncey," he muttered; and then the sky seemed to go out utterly, like a quenched lamp. At that moment another hand grasped his shoulder. The reinforcement of a fresh, unchilled man, unexhausted by the exercise of rowing, and the better able to bear the shock of the water, came bravely up to the relief of the two boys.

It was Lee Calhoun.

He had learned to swim in Charleston harbor, — warmer waves than these; but it seemed they trained no colder hearts.

That night, when the captain sat in his room, a little pale, a little shivery, coddled by Jamie, with a soapstone hot enough to burn his shoes, and lemonade that tasted of the rust in the bottom of the pan adorning the top of the stove; and when the captain was generally "receiving" the Junior crew, Trouncey O'Grian said, in a lower voice than Trouncey was in the habit of using: —

"Don't mention it, Marcy! Remember you let on Sophomore year, to let me out, eh? I don't come of a good family, I know," added honest Trouncey, "but I don't forget a thing like that, captain."

"Ya-as," drawled Lee Calhoun, "*I* thought of that affair myself. I could n't omit it from the curriculum when I saw you going down."

He did not explain himself further. But everybody remembered that it was Marcy who took the Freshman out of the coffin, not many minutes too soon. The three principals in that memorable event looked at each other with something of the curious tenderness of reconciled sections after civil war. Donald colored slightly. Trouncey shook his big head. But Lee was quiet, self-possessed, and cool. It is the delightful thing about

college friendships, that they easily override grudges and trifles, and gather together all sorts of sympathies and loyalties, from all kinds of natures; each bound to many by that young glow and fervor of feeling which adoration for his Alma Mater, and nothing else in life, can give a man.

But Donald was thinking of another thing.

Donald had a sore throat. He was wondering what effect this was likely to have upon the daily elocutionary drill which he practiced for the De Courtney.

There was but one competitor whom Marcy really feared; his most important rival, — a fellow by the name of Hallowell, who had entered Harle and the Junior class that year. Tom Hallowell was four years older than Donald; and a more practiced writer. But he was a poorer speaker. Donald depended upon his own elocution, perhaps quite as much as he was justified in doing. For some reason, nobody could tell just why, Hallowell was not popular in Harle College. For one thing, he had gone too hard and too fast into class politics. He was a brilliant, black-mustached, self-satisfied fellow, who had a vague name for being too shrewd,

what is called "a little tricky," — in short, a college politician. Yet no misdemeanor had ever been clearly proved against him; and Don used to say good-naturedly: —

"What 's the matter with Hallowell? *He 's* all right."

Donald was on excellent terms with his rival. This was considered good form.

CHAPTER XV.

THE DE COURTNEY.

That sore throat following the ducking in Harle harbor proved to be no light matter to Donald Marcy. He was not very ill. His superb health gave him force to throw off a chill which would have endangered the life of a weaker boy. But he worried through a rasping, obstinate inflammation of the larynx, which came to the verge of a case of laryngitis, and could not be fooled with.

The Professor of elocution sent Donald to a doctor; and the doctor ordered the daily drill for the De Courtney stopped for two weeks.

This was a great blow to Don. He writhed under it smartly. He had never known what it was to be thwarted by sickness in anything that he wished exceedingly to do; and his rebellious, young soul rose defiant at the first stroke of tyranny on the part of the body; whose terrible power over human success he had never thought of.

Jamie Fleet comforted him, and took care of him like a mother and a sister and a chum combined in one thoughtful, unselfish, tender fellow. But even Jamie could not console the worried boy. The fellows came in, — but what could the fellows do? His mother wrote him, advising some of her doctor's troches; which gave him a sick headache immediately. His father sent word that he was too busy to write, and that Donald probably deserved the misfortune. Tom Hallowell condoled with him; but there was a spark of ill-concealed delight in his rival's eye. Miss Merry Gorond stopped him on College Street, hung upon his arm, and insisted on expressing her sympathy through a dotted red lace veil, and in a new walking-jacket of tan-colored corduroy, with gloves to match.

"Say — Marcy! So sorry for you that you 've got balked on the De Courtney!"

"Not at all," said Donald, bowing icily. "I have by no means abandoned competing for the De Courtney."

"Oh, well, what 's the odds?" asked Miss Merry lightly. "It 's a stupid thing, anyhow. I never knew any real *society* fellows to get it. Don't be down, Don, — why don't

you ever come to see a girl, in these days?"

"I have been very busy, Miss Merry."

"You have never forgotten — nor forgiven me," said Merry, in a changed tone. "And yet," she said, "I did n't do anything — in particular — to vex you so." Her eyes fell. Her handsome face grew grave.

"I am not your judge, Miss Merry," replied Donald coldly. "Besides," he added, "I was not wholly pleased with myself, either, that evening. I think the less we say of it, the better."

"Good-morning," he pursued, with some embarrassment, for Merry did not answer. Her eyes looked dark and dim. If she had been a different girl, he would have thought those real tears which she bent to hide from him. But, somehow, Merry's emotion did not touch him. It trickled off his sensibility. He lifted his hat to her with cold courtesy, and passed on. A vision of a different girl passed with him, and seemed to keep step with him, — a girl with elastic tread, and sweet, bright, modest face; she did not touch him; but there was something in her look which enfolded him as if he walked in a sunlit cloud, and trod upon the

summer air. When he got back to his room he found a letter from her, written from Northampton. Fay did not write often. She graduated this year; and was too busy to think too much even of Don.

DEAR MR. DON, — I would n't be blue about it, would you? I own, it 's awfully hard. I was so upset when you wrote me about it, that I put my mucilage brush into the ink-bottle, pasted my thesis with it, and then sprinkled my luncheon with sachet-powder. I think it 's too bad, but *really*, sir, I don't believe it 's going to make a bit of difference! No, I don't! It 's my opinion you are going to get that prize. I *would* if I were you.

Hurriedly and sincerely yours,

FAY FLEET.

This little note gave Donald incredible courage. With all his nonchalance, and social ease, and apparent self-confidence, he was easily disheartened; and as sensitive as a thermometer to the right emotional or intellectual weather.

Fay supplied it. It seemed to him that she always did. He said, "Bless her!" Then, after a moment's thought, "God bless her!" He took the little note, and would have pressed it to his lips. But then

he remembered that he had no right to do this. He thought Fay might not like it. So he locked it up in his desk, tenderly, instead. Jamie came in, and asked if he might see what Fay had to say. Donald said, "Oh, certainly," for he thought Fay would rather he did not refuse. She never wrote one word that her brother could not have seen.

Donald began to cultivate a patience as foreign to him as the Sanskrit grammar. He rested his throat, avoided the nervous friction of rebellious worry, and gave himself over for two weeks to close work upon the thought and style of his oration. His subject was: "*The Influence of Imagination upon Science;*" one of those extraordinary themes upon which college boys are expected to pour the accumulated wisdom of twenty years.

Donald had said all he knew about it, and a good deal more. In fact, he stood very much in awe of that oration. It needed some clarification, at least to the mind of the orator, if not to the understanding of his hearers. That two weeks' work "told" upon Marcy's address. Perhaps — who can say? — the patient bearing of a hard thing, the

endurance of denial, the presence of physical pain and inferiority, the feeling of helplessness against uncontrollable powers, and the exercise of tense brain application, — because it was all he could do in the matter, — perhaps these things told, too. Don's courage came up again. At the end of the fortnight he returned to the elocutionary Professor, and the drill went bravely on. But three weeks now remained before the De Courtney. Don's hopes rose. Jamie believed in his chance, and said so, loyally. Most of his friends did as much. Tom Hallowell smoothly congratulated him upon his prospects, and expressed doubts as to his own success. But the bets in general were about evenly divided between Hallowell and Marcy. There were eight other competitors. Jamie Fleet was not one of them. Jamie was not a speaker, and studied too closely for rank to take the time. Trouncey O'Grian was not one either. Trouncey was low-spirited in these days. Poor Trouncey, do his best, was not a scholar. He was afraid of being dropped.

CHAPTER XVI.

WHO WINS?

THE June day on which Harle College competed for the highest oratorical prize of the course dawned gloriously. A well-regulated excitement pervaded the whole institution. The boys usually behaved very well on that day. The honor appertaining to the De Courtney was felt to be great. The prize was a long-established one, full of historic interest. Some of the most eminent men in America, in politics, in the bar, in the pulpit, had been De Courtney men in Junior year at Harle. Even Marcy's preoccupied father had blazed out in a little flash of interest in his son's chances. He wrote:

"It 's the thing, you know, — it 's quite the thing, — De Courtney. It will help you on. It will give you prestige. I will come on, if I can possibly get off. Your mother sends her best wishes, and regrets. She would come, if it were not for the condition of her spine or her heart, — I forget which. She is quite under the weather just now."

Neither Mr. nor Mrs. Marcy was present to hear Donald, but many strangers were. Guests came from near and far. Each one of the other competitors was honored by a group of adoring relatives, all believing that their individual darling was sure to be the successful man. Many visitors, also, came from a merely general interest in the occasion, which was always a pleasant one to the university town and its suburbs.

Summer toilets filled the streets, and glistened in the packed hall. Smiling nods and bright eyes dotted the audience with little sparks of good humor and expectation. The house was thronged. An hour before two o'clock, not a seat was to be had.

Dr. Fleet had come on from Vermont, and was securely packed away by Jamie in one of the seats of honor by half-past one. A reserved seat was empty beside him. It was a great event for the minister to take that journey to Harle. But Dr. Fleet had a very important engagement at Smith College the day before. Fay was graduating. Besides, he said that he thought he 'd better see Jamie, who was going to the seaside to tutor some boys directly after Commencement, and would not be in Tipton till — who knew

when? Jamie knew very well that his father would not have lost the chance to hear his "other boy" compete for the De Courtney, if he had to wear his old overcoat all winter to make up for the traveling expense. It was a "real trial" (so she said, and she seldom said that of anything) to gentle Mrs. Fleet not to go, too; but that was out of the question. She had to content herself with sewing and praying for Fay. As for Donald, Mrs. Fleet wrote him the prettiest little good-luck note in the world, and made him a special necktie for the occasion out of a piece of her wedding dress.

Jamie himself was keenly excited. He was as pale as if he had been going to speak himself; paler than Don, whose rich, live color was a trifle abated, but no more. Jamie hovered over Don till the last moment, with his lingering, loving eyes, then wrung his hand hard, said, "Good luck to you, old boy!" and pulled his hat over his eyes and ran off. Donald was in the green-room. He called after his chum: —

"Say! You 'll take a carriage from the station? Put it on my bill, please. Oh, come! — you will, won't you?"

"Y-yes," answered Jamie — "if you want it so much."

"And be sure you 're in plenty of time," cried Don nervously. "Get in early, sure *pop!*"

Nobody had ever seen Don nervous before. But when it came quarter of two o'clock he was to be seen fidgeting up and down in front of the hall at a great rate. The green-room could n't hold him. The boy, in his dress-suit, with Mrs. Fleet's wedding-tie exquisitely knotted under his well-cut chin, and the blue ribbon binding *The Influence of Imagination upon Science* sticking out from his breast pocket, marched to and fro with a restlessness not calculated to calm the nerve that was to win the great De Courtney prize.

Fifteen minutes! — ten minutes before two! Where *was* Jamie? What could this mean? Nine minutes — eight — seven! Don dashed his watch into his pocket in a rage of anxiety. Six minutes!

Ah, there! A carriage rolling madly up the blazing, dusty road! It dashed up, the door was flung open, and Jamie leaped out, wiping his hot face, and looking as if he had been the horse, and had pulled that hack the whole way.

"Train late!" he panted. "Go in, Don, go in! Father 'll keep the seat. She 's all right."

A pretty figure in a plain, pale-brown, summer traveling-dress, and little, brown straw bonnet, with a dash of blue in it, jumped after Jamie and held out both hands to Don, impulsively. She held a blue fan in one. Blue was Fay's color.

"I thought you 'd *never* come!" cried Donald rapturously. "I shall get it now, — I shall win, now *you 're* here."

"Of course you 'll win, anyhow!" said Fay, blushing delightfully. They talked in ecstatic snatches as Jamie hurried them toward the hall.

"So you graduated yesterday!"

"Was n't it nice? That 's why I could come to-day."

"It 's cruel I could n't come. But you see I could n't. You don't look a bit more learned, that I see. You have n't got that Greek expression yet."

"Greek met Greek, sir, — I don't need it. Are you scared?"

"Not a bit. I was — a little. I 'm not now."

"Good-luck go with you, Mr. Don! I

asked that you should get it," said Fay, in a low, sober tone.

"You *asked?*"

She nodded. Then Donald understood that Fay had been praying that he might succeed on that great day.

But Jamie dragged her off then. Donald wrung her hand and dashed back to the green-room, and tried to cool his emotions in a big pail of very strong lemonade, provided to encourage the speakers; and he was principally successful, in this case, in puckering his mouth very much, and ravaging his soul with despair because he could not get a glass down in the audience to Fay, who must be so warm and dusty, poor thing! But how like a shaded flower she looked! So pretty, so fresh, so cool, so sweet, so — so — so —

But the speaking had begun. The buzz in the great hall had ceased. The first competitor, a boy of eighteen, chiefly legs, and looking as white as an ice-cream, was telling the audience, in a trembling voice, his views on the relation of the tariff to the future of American history. Donald was to speak ninth. Tom Hallowell followed him. Hallowell was in the green-room, looking

extraordinarily self-possessed. Don looked at him. Why *was* it that nobody exactly liked Hallowell? He was a gentlemanly fellow, and he stood well. He twirled his heavy, black mustache with a slight smile, as he returned Marcy's look. Any fellow in the Junior class would have given eighty marks for that mustache.

"It 'll have an effect on the audience, too," thought Don. "It increases his chances, blame him!"

But he shook hands cordially with Hallowell, who inquired after his throat. Then Donald sat down on an overturned ice-cream keg in the corner, — it was the coolest spot he could find, — and, drawing the blue-ribboned manuscript from his pocket, he devoted his attention exclusively to the "*Influence of Imagination upon Science*," until his moment came.

"*Donald C. Marcy, New York city. The Influence of*" —

But Don heard no more. He stood upon the stage with his brain in a whirl. He knew that the Professor's voice had ceased announcing him, that his own struck in upon the dreadful silence; that it hesitated, strengthened, rose, and filled the hall; that

his courage rose with his voice, and that in three minutes he was past all peril of stage-fright, and would just as lief have addressed twenty thousand people as two.

While he spoke he saw everything, — everybody; the flutter of fans all over the hall. There was one — a scarlet one — far by the doors; he knew that blazing fan; it was Merry Gorond's. He saw the President and his family sitting in state near the front, and knew by the hitch in the President's left eyebrow that he was doing pretty well so far. Prexy never cultivated that look for a failure. He saw the Professor's daughter, whom he used to take to drive; he thought she looked a little old, to-day. He saw all the fellows, — he noticed that George Washington Clay, the negro, had on a new frock-coat, and wondered if he hired it from a pawnbroker's. He saw Calhoun and O'Grian, quite distinctly. Trouncey was one of the ushers. He was listening, all ears, all eyes, a big, good-hearted, unreasoning adorer, hoping with all his might that the speaker would "come in at the death." Lee Calhoun was attending politely, not wishing him ill, either. Jamie, pale with emotion, half hidden by a pillar, lifted to

the young speaker the face of gentle trust which had steadied him through so many college scrapes, and had for three years been so dear to him, — Jamie, ready, Don half believed, to give up his own hope of the valedictory, if he could secure the De Courtney for his chum.

And here sat Dr. Fleet, his fine, scholarly face illuminated with critical pleasure. Evidently the minister expected his other boy to win his spurs out of that oration. And *here* —

After his eye had first dared meet hers, it seemed to Donald that he saw nothing, that he knew nothing, that he felt nothing, in all this great, still house, but Fay. She simply filled the place. She sat, leaning forward a little, her head slightly bent, her little blue fan, with its white lace edge, held poised, like a thought arrested, against the curve of her soft cheek. Her sweet, intelligent face was upturned. Her deep eyes seemed to veil themselves as if there were something more within them than her modest feeling would reveal among so many people. Her attitude, her breathlessness, her fitful color, her half-averted look, all said: —

"I believe in you! But I 'm not going to tell! You 're doing well. Steady, sir, — steady! Don't look at *me* so hard! Stea-dy! *You 'll get it.*"

The girl's inspiration was finer than wine to him.

Donald felt as if he spoke on wings, and lived upon the hopes of Paradise. And there! Before he knew it, the young orator had come to the end, had paused, bowed, and turned to leave the stage. A thunder of applause recalled him. Donald turned, surprised. He did not expect such a storm. Wave upon wave it broke about him. Marcy was a very popular young man at Harle. His success was considered certain, and the general pleasure was emphatic. Flowers fell on him as he stood bowing. The Professor's daughter classically asked Trouncey to toss a wreath of laurel; Merry Gorond stood upon a seat and threw, with precision, a blazing bouquet of the reddest roses to be found in Harle; but Fay, — Fay threw no flowers; she sat with downcast eyes. Donald felt a momentary pang; when, softly, almost unobserved, there fell at his feet a tiny cluster of white violets, hidden in their own leaves. Dr. Fleet

threw them in a very quiet way ; Fay's card was not even tied to them ; but that was not needed. Donald gathered them quickly out of sight and hid them in his breast pocket, as he bowed himself off the stage.

"Good elocution," he heard one of the committee whisper, as he passed by.

"The oration was well constructed, too."

Tom Hallowell followed the little *furor* which his predecessor's address had caused, with perfect self-possession. Marcy's success did not seem to trouble him at all. He delivered his oration with a grave self-confidence which it was impossible not to regard respectfully. His elocution was inferior to his rival's. Three sentences settled that. But the material of his address was, it must be admitted, remarkably, even unexpectedly excellent. He compelled attention, and held what he had compelled. His thought was clear, strong, even original; his style practiced and charming. Alas, he was an older boy than Don, and his maturity "told." When he had finished his oration, he retired among fewer flowers and less enthusiasm than his rival; but followed by anxious looks upon the part of some of Donald's friends.

Fay did not look anxious. She looked startled. Her cheeks were brightly flushed, and her eyes flashed with a singular look. She made as if she would speak to her father, but changed her mind, and said nothing, sitting lost in thought while the committee went out to make their decision.

It was a shock, but it was not wholly a surprise, to many in that audience, when, after half an hour's debate, the committee reported that the De Courtney prize was awarded to Thomas Z. Hallowell.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE GIRL AND THE COMMITTEE.

To say that the announcement of the committee was a terrible blow to Donald Marcy is to say nothing at all about it. The sympathy of the audience and the judgment of the committee, as we know, had gone strongly with him, until Hallowell's address was well under way. In fact, there had been but one opinion on the platform and in the hall. The De Courtney prize was as good as given to Marcy, up to the moment that Tom Hallowell's oration had snatched it so surprisingly away from him. Donald had understood this perfectly well. Trusting to his unquestionably superior elocution, and underrating, as, alas, it proved, the force of his rival's thought and the brilliancy of his style, Don had retired from the stage, pressing with Fay's violets a confident hope of success to his beating heart.

The bolt of defeat struck him like lightning. He tried to make the best of it among

the fellows, but he was greatly shaken. His chum reached him in such time as it takes the report to follow the flash, and got him out of the green-room and away, as soon as was possible.

"I — I must go back and congratulate Hallowell," said Don, half-way down the steep, winding stairs, standing still, and looking confusedly at Jamie Fleet.

"Well — if you insist on it," hesitated Jamie. "I suppose it *would* be the thing. But I meant to spare you that, old fellow."

"It 's the manly way," said Don. "I can't afford to seem mean, because I 'm beaten."

He climbed slowly back, went in among the fellows, and shook hands heartily with Tom.

"That 's kind of you, Marcy," said Hallowell, in a low voice. He regarded Donald with a strange look. His big, black eyes burned, and that enviable mustache worked nervously. Hallowell was very pale, — paler than his defeated rival. Several of the fellows noticed this, and commented on it afterward.

When Fleet and Marcy got out of doors, they were met by an usher with a message.

They were wanted, he said, directly, on the lowest step at the right of the front entrance. An elderly gentleman was there, and a young lady; they had got out by a side door, — he had helped them, the usher said, — and they seemed to be in some haste. He believed the young lady did n't feel well; faint, perhaps, though the usher added that she did n't seem to be the fainting kind.

The two boys hurried to the spot indicated, and were met by Dr. Fleet and Fay. Dr. Fleet grasped Donald's hand warmly.

"Cheer up, my boy," he said. "He 's older than you. Many a De Courtney has been won by a poorer address than yours. Your oration will be remembered in Harle. It was downright, good, conscientious work, and would be a credit to any boy of your age. I congratulate you."

"Thank you, sir," said Donald, trying to smile. "It does n't matter."

He turned to Fay. Fay had not spoken. She stood still, with burning cheeks and excited eyes. She held out her hand to him in a silence which he could not understand. In some embarrassment the little party moved on to find the carriage which Don had ordered to take Fay and her father to

their hotel. Naturally, Don fell into step with Fay, and the two dropped behind.

"Don't speak to me!" began Fay, under her breath. "I have something very important on my mind. I can't talk yet."

"Are you ashamed of me?" pleaded poor Don.

"I 'm *proud* of you!" exploded Fay.

"Oh! then I don't care!" cried Don, brightening swiftly. "What 's the De Courtney, if I have n't disappointed *you?*"

At this moment a group of girls passed them, chatting noisily. One turned, and bowed to him with marked interest. The shadow of a red parasol wrapped her face in a blaze of color.

"Too bad, Marcy!" she said loudly, nodding her showy hat.

She glanced keenly through her red lace veil at Fay Fleet before she passed on, and smiled, not quite pleasantly. Donald looked from Merry Gorond to Fay; his whole soul sickened when Merry spoke to him. He felt almost sorry to have such a recoil from the girl. His eyes rested on Fay's pure, modest, intellectual face with a kind of ethereal pride. He had no right to look upon her with any other kind of pride; his manly delicacy

never intruded by a thought upon boundaries to which he had no charter. But his whole nature bowed before her with a beautiful reverence. He felt as if he could have knelt at her feet, or put his proud, young curls humbly beneath the blessing of her soft hands.

For the moment this emotion lifted the boy above the cruel disappointment he was suffering.

He was recalled to the facts of the day by Fay's asking her brother if she might go and see the college library. It was late in the afternoon, five o'clock at least, and both Jamie and Donald expressed some surprise at Fay's request. They were all pretty well tired out, to tell the truth. But Fay urged her point quietly, and her brother proposed that Don should take her wherever she wished to go.

"Father is used up," said Jamie. "We can't trot *him* round libraries to-day. He knows every book there by heart. I'll take him up to my room to rest, Don, and you look after my sister, will you? I suppose she has a right to be so all-fired literary if she wants to. *She's* got her diploma. You and I are nothing but undergraduates."

So Donald, nothing loath, escorted Fay to the library alone. It was cooler there; but few visitors were visible, many of them having rushed for their return trains, and more having gone home to get off their hot, best clothes, and cool before tea-time. Donald and Fay sat down in one of the shaded alcoves and rested a minute. Fay was still so silent that Don was a little puzzled by her manner.

"Ask the librarian, please," said Fay directly, "to get me some books I want, will you?"

"Certainly. And what, Miss Fay?"

"Well — let me see," hesitated Fay. "I think I would like to look over Rufus Choate. Has he a good edition of Choate? It will rest us, and give us something else to think of, don't you think so?"

Don was not very sure about it, but he obeyed the young lady without question. Bringing two large octavo volumes of Rufus Choate's addresses, he deposited them upon Fay's pretty brown lap, and sat down again, watching her in silence while she turned the leaves.

"Are you going to read aloud?" asked Don presently.

"Perhaps so," nodded Fay. "Here! *There!*"

Her face crimsoned suddenly, from brow to chin. She read a page to herself — skipped — read another — shut the book, and holding her finger to keep the place, looked with blazing eyes at Don. She had taken off her warm glove, like the true book-lover that she was, lest perchance a speck of the color from the kid should mar the margin of the beautifully printed page.

"It is just as I thought!" cried Fay. "Only I wanted to make sure of it. I did n't dare say so, seeing *father* did n't find it out. Father knows everything everybody has ever written on every subject, you know. I did n't know but I might be mistaken, since *he* did n't get up and shake that fellow by the coat-collar and toss him off the stage into the middle of the main aisle!" exploded Fay.

"What in the name of — Rufus Choate — *do* you mean?" demanded Donald.

"I mean," said Fay more quietly, "that Thomas Z. Hallowell has no more right to the De Courtney prize than — than that girl with the red parasol!"

"I don't understand you in the least,"

said Don, blushing in his turn. "Besides, she 's nothing to me — that girl."

"Oh, never mind the *girl!*" replied Fay impatiently. "It 's the boy I 'm after. The boy is a plagiarist. He has copied a great part of one of Rufus Choate's orations. Mr. Don, the De Courtney prize is yours."

"Let me see," whispered Don. He was trembling very much, and all the color had left his face.

Fay handed him the big book, and they looked it over together. Donald felt the agitated motion of her sweet, young breath. He dared not look at her. He pinned his eyes to the page which Fay pointed out to him.

"See," said Fay. "Look there. He called his piece: '*American Nationality.*' That is the very subject. Mr. Choate's '*Address on the Fourth of July*,' delivered in Boston on July 5, 1858. Mr. Hallowell has copied a half page — whole page — word for word. Just read!

"'*Did not Sparta and Athens hate one another, and fight one another habitually, and yet when those Lacedæmonian levies gazed so steadfastly on the faces of the fallen at Marathon, did they not give Greek*

tears to Athens and Greek curses to Persia, and in the hour of Platæa did they not stand together against the barbarians?'

"Don't you remember how the audience thrilled at that? And there — and here — and read *that!* Thrilled!" cried Fay, "I should think they would! The idea of supposing that a fellow with that kind of a mustache — waxed on the ends — could write like *that!*

"I hope," added Fay, looking perfectly magnificent, "that he has n't got a sister, or a — a real nice girl friend anywhere to be mortified dead ashamed of him, the scoundrel!"

"Why, this is dreadful!" said Don. Really, for the moment, he was thinking more of Hallowell's disgrace than of his own now well-assured success.

He and Fay sat and looked at each other with bright, sympathetic, young eyes. How wonderful it was in that dim alcove! How calm, how set-apart, how sheltered! Their joy seemed to mount from shelf to shelf of the dreary old books, like a little climbing elf who made himself at home everywhere, as human joy has the right to do, and, thank Heaven, it will take its rights.

"How — in — the — world," asked Donald in an awed voice, "did you ever find it out?"

He felt at that moment as if Fay's learning overtopped the world. It was positively appalling. How was he ever to keep pace with a girl like that? — a girl who knew more than the faculty of Harle and all the De Courtney committee! So thought Don, looking at her with the reverence of a janitor at Hypatia.

"Oh, that 's nothing!" said Fay carelessly. "My first thesis was on Rufus Choate. *I* was crammed, — people forget the old things, you know. It 's only a chance who remembers what, I think, anyhow. It was just good luck for me. I gave up Rufus and wrote on Daniel Webster, after all. But I got it into my head."

Donald and Fay passed out of the cool library into the hot, summer evening, in a kind of solemn agitation. The consciousness of the disgrace they were about to expose began to come to them with heaviness. To hurl a young man down from the top of glory (so far as college life could give that glittering thing) into the dust of shame, — of life-long shame; for a deed like this fol-

lows a man to the end in the educated world, — to dash him headlong, at a moment's notice, by one flash of a girl's thought, at the touch of a girl's hand, — it seemed hard. For the moment, to Donald's highly wrought mood, it seemed cruel.

"I don't want to do it!" he cried, stopping short.

"You *ought*, I think," said Fay firmly.

"I don't believe it," argued Don. "I 'd better lose the De Courtney twice over than bring all that shame and misery on people. I saw his mother in the audience. . . . She came way on from the West on purpose. I *can't!*" cried Don.

"I did n't like her looks so much," he added ruefully. "She was a showy woman, — one of the kind that wears — what do you call 'em? shows her arms, you know, in a public hall. But she was his mother. I saw her crying when he was speaking, — for joy, I suppose. Miss Fay, I won't do it! I 'm sorry to disagree with you, but I won't tell of Hallowell."

"What will you do?" asked Fay, turning a bit pale. She knew when Don set his lips together that way, that he meant business. What he said, he would perform. Yet she felt confident in her own mind that the facts

of the case ought not to be suppressed; not for Don's sake so much as for the sake of that college honor so dear to Harle, and to every educated man. Fay was greatly agitated and perplexed by the position in which she found herself. All their happiness of a moment ago had drifted away into a swirl of doubt and distress. She lifted to Donald, with tears in her beautiful eyes, a timid, womanly look that went to his heart.

"Excuse me, Miss Fay," he said gently; "but I — can't talk about it just now. I 'll see you safely to our room, and leave you to J. and your father for a little while. I have some business to attend to."

"Where are you going?" asked Fay.

"I am going," replied Donald, holding his head very straight, "right to Hallowell himself. I am going to tell him that I know everything; and then I 'm going to tell him that I don't mean to tell. Maybe I 'd better see *him*. It may do him good for all the rest of his life."

He lifted his hat to Fay gravely, and having opened the door of his study, where her father and brother sat, left her without another word. She watched him from the window. He went directly over, with ringing steps, to Tom Hallowell's room.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A NOBLE FELLOW.

Thomas Hallowell was sitting in his room, by an odd chance, alone. The winner of the great De Courtney prize was not overpowered as yet by the acclamations of his college-mates. Perhaps the hurrah was delayed till evening, or perhaps there was not much heart for it among the fellows. At all events, when Donald Marcy came in, he found Hallowell, as I say. The door was half open, and Donald pushed in simultaneously with his knock. He was in time to see his rival lift a haggard face from the table, where he had apparently been sitting with his head buried in his arms.

"Ah! Marcy. That is good of you. Sit down. Glad you find me alone. I've just got back from taking my mother to her train. Take an easier chair, do."

"So your mother has gone back to her home?" asked Donald, feeling embarrassed before his unpleasant errand.

"Yes. She meets friends in New York who will look after her. I did n't expect her on. She 's quite beside herself with the result. I did n't know but she 'd have hysterics there in the hall. Women are such emotional, undisciplined creatures! My mother is, unfortunately, very partial to me. I 'm the only son."

"Yes?" said Donald awkwardly. "Very natural."

There was an uncomfortable pause. Hallowell drummed on the table uneasily. He muttered some commonplace about the weather or the audience. He avoided looking Marcy in the eye while he spoke. It was impossible not to notice this. But Donald regarded him steadily. Suddenly he broke out: —

"It 's no use, Hallowell. I can't play small-talk under the circumstances. I 've come here for a special purpose, and I may as well out with it."

"Pray do," politely from Hallowell. "Have a cigar to help you out?"

"No, thank you, I won't smoke just now. I came in to tell you, Hallowell, — I thought it was the best way, on the whole, — I may as well let you know that I know all about it. The game 's up — and it 's in my hands."

Hallowell lifted his wandering eyes to Donald's face. It was difficult to say which of the two boys was the paler, at that moment.

"I don't understand you," began Hallowell.

"Oh, come!" said Donald, with a slight impatience. "Don't be a fool. I tell you, I know *everything*."

"Do me the favor to explain yourself," returned Hallowell, with cold courtesy. "What do you know? I fail to follow you."

"I know that it was n't Thomas Z. Hallowell who won the De Courtney to-day," said Donald, in a low, clear voice.

"And who, then? Donald Marcy?"

"Rufus Choate, sir!"

Hallowell made a slight, quick movement, settled back in his chair, put his hands in his pockets, and regarded his visitor, now, with great steadiness.

"Go on," he said boldly; but his voice shook.

"You have used Mr. Choate's Fourth of July address, delivered in Boston on July 5, 1858, Hallowell. You have cribbed it word for word. You have cribbed whole

pages. Your oration contains only so much of your own material as is necessary to weave together the eloquent passages from one of the first of American orators, which have given you the prize. You are a plagiarist, and a dishonor to the De Courtney, and to Harle College."

Donald brought these words out firmly; but not without gentleness. He was much agitated by what he had undertaken to do, and, torn between righteous rage and human pity, knew not how to work his way through this distressing interview.

"I 'm awfully sorry," he said, when he had finished. "Hallowell! I should n't think it would have *paid*. A man must feel so, afterwards, — to do a thing like that."

Donald's fine, scornful face, half melting, half marble, looked like a fashionable young angel's, as it regarded the dark, averted countenance of the disgraced man. For some moments Hallowell made no answer at all to his accuser, then he took his hands out of his pockets, and brought the front legs of his chair down hard upon the floor.

"Well," he said sullenly, "your proofs?"

"I read Choate's address this afternoon, at a quarter past five, in the college library."

"Who put you up to it?"

"I decline to say."

"I insist on knowing. You never found that out, yourself. You 're not scholar enough. You don't read. Somebody told you."

"Well — yes," admitted Donald, "somebody did."

"It makes all the difference to me, — all the difference in the world — *in all my life*," cried Hallowell, his voice rising to a sudden pitch of unmistakable agony. "Who put you up to this devilish job? How many people have shared your discovery? All over college, is it?"

Hallowell, as he spoke, glanced at his watch. His tone and manner were defiant in the extreme.

"I have not told a soul, Tom," said Donald gently.

"That 's good of you, Marcy," gasped Hallowell, in a changed voice.

"I came straight to you. I thought that was fair. Nobody in Harle knows it but just myself and this — this other person."

"Who is he?" pleaded Hallowell. "Don't you see I *must* know?"

"You 'll never know from me," firmly

replied Donald. "It is a person who discovered it, and who — who told me."

"It 's a woman ! " cried Hallowell, bringing his fist down sharply on the table, till the inkstand and mucilage bottle rang.

"It is a lady — yes," replied Donald, flushing slightly, "but I 'd rather not mention her name."

"No one but an educated woman would have discovered it," muttered the college politician astutely. "She 's a college graduate, — so she 's a young lady. If she 's young, she 'll tell. Has she a brother in Harle ? " demanded Hallowell.

Donald made no reply. There followed a long silence between the two boys. Hallowell broke it by saying in a dull voice : —

"It 's all up with me. It 'll be sure to leak out. I may as well let it out myself. It 's a devil of a business, anyhow. I 've wished I were out of it for weeks. But I 'd got in ; I did n't know how. It 's all one with me ! I 'm disgraced ! I 'm ruined for life ! "

With a groan, the wretched boy dropped his face into his hands, and his tall frame shook as if with suppressed and terrible sobs. The sight went to Donald's heart.

"*I* won't tell, Hallowell," he urged. "And she won't, if I ask her not to. I forgot to before I came," he added truthfully, "but I 'll get right back. The young lady won't cross my wishes about it. I move you don't say a word; as long as I don't expose you, you 're safe. Come, Hallowell! I let you off, with all my heart. A fellow saved — that way — would n't do such a thing again, would he? You *could n't*. It might make a new man of you, might n't it, Tom?"

"Do you really mean," asked Hallowell, in a low voice, "that you would give up everything? The De Courtney is yours, Marcy. No doubt about it. You earned it. You don't mean you 'd go without the *De Courtney* to save a fellow you don't care for from — from shame — and disgrace?"

"I want the De Courtney," admitted Don. "I want it very much. But that 's over now. I don't want it at the expense of telling on a classmate. I 'd rather go without, than think of all that misery — that disgrace. Oh, Tom Hallowell! how *could* you?"

"Marcy," said Hallowell, — "Marcy" — His lip trembled, his voice choked. "You 're

a good fellow! I did n't know you were that kind, — a stylish chap like you; and captain of the Junior crew, — up to everything. A fellow might have thought it of Fleet, or some of those saints; but *you* " —

Donald smiled, tossing back his bright curls.

" I don't know as I ever thought it myself, Tom, till now. But it seems to me a clear case. I don't *want* the thing at such a cost."

" You 're a good fellow," repeated Hallowell drearily. " I could n't make you understand how I came to do it. You would n't *see*. But it 's done. I 've got to abide by it now. . . . Before God!" cried Hallowell, shaken with sudden passion, " if I ever get out of this, you don't catch me in such a scrape again! Judging from what I 've undergone in the last three weeks, — in these last three hours, — Don Marcy, I declare I believe it would *pay* to be an honest fellow! "

Donald made no answer. This seemed to him rather a low motive for a high purpose, and he did not know what to say to the " tricky " boy to whom sincerity did not come naturally. But, perhaps, to such a nature

as Hallowell's, even a high wish must come first upon a low plane.

"Well," said Donald slowly, "I don't know that there 's anything more to say about it. I guess I 'll be going, Hallowell."

Hallowell's face had gone down into his elbow again; he seemed quite overcome with his disgrace; he held out his hand pitiably without looking at Donald, who took it, after an instant's hesitation. Hallowell wrung Don's hand in a grip of remorse, or agony, or gratitude, or reverence, or who knew what? Perhaps in all combined; and Donald left him without another word.

But when he got back to his rooms, he found a scene of high agitation. Jamie was walking up and down the study in a white rage. No one had ever seen J. so angry in his life. Dr. Fleet was excitedly writing a note at the study table. Fay came up to Donald instantly, and held out both her hands. She looked like a pretty culprit and a severe moral judge woven into one determined and yet timid little girl.

"I 've told father!" she cried. "I *had* to tell my father. I have n't mentioned it to another soul, — I have n't done a thing about it. I did n't dare to, till you got

back. But I *knew* you 'd let me tell father. Are you angry with me?" pleaded Fay, drooping under Donald's quick, keen glance.

"I am sorry," said Don. How could he be angry with Fay? He stood quite still, looking about at his three friends. His face had a high and beautiful expression.

"I 've seen Hallowell," he said quietly. "I 've told him I would n't tell. I 've given my word."

"Look here, Don," pleaded Jamie, "leave this to father, won't you? Your father is n't here. Somebody 's got to advise you. He knows. We 're not very old, yet. Just you calm down, Don, and let father manage the whole business."

"What 's your father doing, J.?" asked Donald sharply.

"I 'm writing to the President, Donald," said Dr. Fleet, speaking for the first time. "I am suggesting to him that he read Rufus Choate's Fourth of July address for 1858; and that he withhold my name from all connection with the subject. That 's what I 'm doing."

"I object, sir," said Donald firmly and respectfully. "I forbid you to do it. It is my affair."

"Now there, Donald, you are mistaken," cried Dr. Fleet, suddenly rising with a force which sent the study-chair sprawling behind his venerable and scholarly figure. "It is *not* your affair! Your affair is a small part of the whole business! It is the affair of the De Courtney prize. It is the affair of Harle College. It is the affair of Harle University. It is the affair of the whole educated world. No, sir! You are wrong. See here, sir!" Dr. Fleet drew his bent form to its full height, and his studious face flashed with holy wrath. "I am an alumnus of this college, sir. I am an old De Courtney man myself. I won the De Courtney in 1836. You don't suppose I 'm going to stand by and see the *De Courtney* dishonored and never raise a hand to prevent it? Why, sir, that prize is fifty years old, and such a deed as this never passed beyond the committee before, since Eliakim De Courtney put three thousand dollars on deposit in the Harle Savings Bank, and willed the principal and interest to the most distinguished oratorical prize in the United States. *No*, sir!"

That evening, directly after tea, a bent,

scholastic figure might have been seen walking determinedly up College Street, on the way to the President's house. It was Dr. Fleet. The honor of half a century of De Courtneys sat upon his brow. His lips were compressed with an iron will. His thin hand was clenched at his side. His deep-set eyes flashed fire.

Now, as he turned the corner to the President's aristocratic street, he came hard against another scholarly figure coming in the opposite direction. It was the President himself. These two learned men bumped against each other, and recoiled with two highly intellectual bows.

"Baxter!" cried Dr. Fleet.

"Why, Fleet!" cried the President.

"I was on my way to tell you"—

"I know it," interrupted the President. "I was just coming to tell *you*."

"How the — how did you happen to hear of this abominable trick?" exploded the clergyman.

"Hallowell has confessed. He came to my house two hours ago, confessed the whole business, and is on his way home by the night express."

"He knew Harle would be too hot to hold him!" cried the Rev. Dr. Fleet.

"Oh! he's no lamb," nodded the President angrily. "A fool never outwitted the De Courtney committee."

"It's a miserable business!" said Dr. Fleet.

"I have circulated the facts," said the President. "They will be all over the university in half an hour. I believe I'll go with you and congratulate Marcy. I should n't object to getting there before the committee. Marcy is a promising fellow. He took to his books too late for rank, I'm sorry to say, but he has it in him. He will be heard from, some day, if he only proves to have good staying qualities. That's the thing, after all, with the lads. That is what decides, — hard work, and keeping at it."

CHAPTER XIX.

HURRAH!

After Dr. Fleet had gone to the President's, the three young people sat down in Donald's study, not knowing, altogether, how to treat the situation. Donald was very much excited, and kept going restlessly to the window to watch for Dr. Fleet's return. He did not feel inclined to talk, even to Fay, who sat with her bonnet off, reading a New York evening paper.

"This panic in Wall Street is growing serious," said Fay, breaking a long silence.

"What panic?" Don started and came to her, holding out his hand for the paper. "I have n't looked at a newspaper for three days, I 've been so given over to drilling for the prize. I did n't know there was anything out of the common run in Wall Street."

He took the paper which Fay handed to him, and glanced at the column which she had folded over with the neatness of a newspaper-reading girl.

"I noticed it," said her brother, "but I thought there was no use in bothering Don, just at this crisis, with that sort of thing. Nothing serious, is it, Don?"

"I can't tell," replied Donald thoughtfully. "So many of these things blow over. This looks as if it might do some mischief — among speculators. I see, now; that 's why father did n't come on. He could n't get off. Father will be very much excited by this. That was quite a scene on 'Change to-day. Father does n't take this sort of thing as coolly as he used to. He 's older, I suppose. There, Miss Fay, there 's your father! Upon my soul, J., Prexy 's with him!"

"Good gracious!" cried Jamie.

"Put that pretty blue Persian rug under the study-chair," suggested Fay, "and why don't you throw that piece of cashmere drapery over the chair? It looks a little square on the Japanese table, does n't it?" Fay fluttered about with bright cheeks, putting pleasant feminine touches to the boys' room, while the distinguished tread of the President mounted the stairs.

It was a pretty room, — Donald's rooms always were, — but the girl herself was the prettiest thing in it; and the President

looked as if he thought so, when her father presented him to her, proudly enough.

"So this is the young lady who has detected Harle College in a literary blunder, is it?" smiled the President, with a gallant bow which he reserved for Commencement and similar emergencies. "I am honored, Miss Fleet. And you, sir," — he turned to Donald hastily, — "I came on purpose to congratulate *you*. I wish you joy, Marcy, of the De Courtney prize. (I promised Mrs. Baxter I 'd be back in ten minutes; I 've stolen away on parole. Our house is full of De Courtney company.) You did yourself credit, sir, to-day. Your elocution was good, and your material showed careful work. I congratulate you, Marcy!"

"Thank you very much, sir," said Donald modestly, "but I was n't going to tell."

"You *did n't* tell," said the President shortly; "a higher power looks after such things. It is taken out of your hands. The honor of the university was at stake. Personal scruples have to surrender to public interest sometimes. Thank you. This is a delightful chair. I am quite comfortable, — are you, Miss Fleet? That 's

right. I think," added the President, turning his genial face toward the open window, and keeping one keen eye on the crowded street, — "I think I see the committee. Marcy, don't I? There 's the chairman and one member to keep his courage up, — yes; Dawson and Dawkins. They are after you, Marcy. This is their official recantation. I don't know that I envy them," murmured the President, in a human outburst of confidence. He leaned back against the cashmere drapery of the study-chair, looking as Presidential as he could; but there was a merry twinkle in his learned eye. That unfortunate committee did not expect to find the President there.

This was evident enough when they came in. Mr. Dawson was a minister, and Mr. Dawkins was a judge. The respectability of their several callings sat heavily upon these unlucky gentlemen just then. If they had only been fishmongers or tinsmiths, and society had never required of them an intimate acquaintance with Rufus Choate! Gladly would they have been old-clothes men at that moment; if so, they need not have been amenable candidates for that omniscience which is the least that is required of

the committee sitting upon the De Courtney prize.

When they had explained their errand, which they did as if they were in a hurry to get through with it and go home, the Rev. Mr. Dawson officially announced to Donald Marcy: —

"Owing to the dishonor of your competing rival, proved a plagiarist by the use of material recently without the range of the committee's reading, and the commission of shrewd deceit which has passed the detection of all the authorities of Harle College," — here the committee glanced grimly at the President, — "to you, Mr. Marcy, is hereby tendered the unquestionable possession of the De Courtney prize to-day competed for."

Donald took the silver medal and the hundred-dollar gold piece of the great De Courtney, with a preternatural solemnity. He heard Fay suffocating with stifled merriment behind him. The twinkle in the Presidential eye had grown into a dignified luminary, powerfully suppressed. The clergyman and the honorable judge fidgeted.

"The young lady seems amused!" snapped the Rev. Mr. Dawson, growing quite red in the face.

"Oh, I *beg* your pardon!" cried Fay unexpectedly, her pretty, girlish treble breaking upon the awkward scene like sudden dance music. "O—o—oh, I *can't* help it! I can't *help* laughing! It is so — so — so — *funny!*"

The girl's ringing laugh was all that was wanted to set the dignity of the occasion free. The President joined her, laughing right roundly. The boys laughed as fast and as hard as they dared. The committee, after an instant's hesitation, laughed too; and all the discomfort of the situation was gone.

"We're all in about the same box, gentlemen," said the President politely. "This young lady has the laugh on us, in more senses than one. I think the best we can do is to let her get what fun there is out of the scrape, and laugh with her."

And laugh they did, those four eminent men and three young people, as if they had all been boys and girls together; and Donald treated them to ice-cream and sponge cake, until the Rev. Mr. Dawson and Mr. Judge Dawkins were well cooled off; and thus the pulpit and the bar were reconciled on the spot, with the Higher Education of Woman.

While this merry scene was progressing in Donald's room, he was attracted by an unusual stir on the green and in the street. College songs filled the summer evening. A heavily-increasing chorus of young voices rang to the sky. Harle boys sing well, and there was music such as one might well go far to hear when such a throng as that was out. The swell of the sound pressed nearer and nearer. The boys were after Marcy. They were singing their way to him in a great troupe: —

"Oh, ho! I 'd give my eyes
For the great De Courtney prize,
My eyes — eyes — eyes
For the prize — ize — ize,
My meerschaum and my eyes
For the prize!
Oh, a Junior gay I 'd be,
For the swell De Court—e—ney,
De Court—e—nee—ee—e!"

"Hark!" said Jamie Fleet, jumping up, and going to stand beside his sister, with a pleasant instinctive motion of protection. "They 've got hold of it. It 's all out. Hear that?"

Slowly and sweetly, to the plaintive tune which deals with the death of the celebrated "Nelly," the boys began to sing: —

"Oh, it was a la—dy!
Rufus read, she did — she did!
Rah! it was a la—dy!
Took the trick. She did!
Let it be a la—dy,
Scorn our tricks, she may, she may!
Honor to the la—dy!
In Harle, for many a day!"

In a moment, the boys of Harle, a mass of swaying, surging, young humanity, had rolled up, like a musical wave, to South Middle Hall, and there, outside of Donald's low windows, they came to a halt, and called out the winner of the De Courtney. All the college and a great part of the university were there. The excitement ran high. The details of the story had got out, and the boys' enthusiasm went wild.

"Three cheers for Marcy! Three more! Three times three for Marcy! Three for the De Courtney! Three more for the Cap'n of the Junior crew! Three for the 'Varsity! Rah! Rah! Rah! for Harle! Rah! for the 'Varsity! A speech from Marcy! Speech! Speech! Speech! Give us an oration! Give us the De Courtney over again!"

Donald stood in the window, with bright eyes, tossing back his curls with his strong, fine hand. His glance flashed over the boys;

who would have thought any one fellow could count so many friends? Pressing to the front, Trouncey O'Grian's huge figure rose. His tremendous lungs challenged the united hurrah of half the class, one would almost say of half the university. Trouncey looked as if one prick of his little finger might have shaken the breath out of Hallowell's body. Nonchalantly leaning against an obliging underclass man as he sang, Lee Calhoun stood gracefully, making the best of the occasion, and nothing loath to do it, either. Donald's Junior crew were all there, with the college colors flying from little gold boat-hooks upon the lapels of their coats. George Washington Clay sang a magnificent tenor, trained in the Fiske Jubilee chorus, and cheered as agreeably as any white man. The negro student was fond of Marcy, who had always treated him "like anybody else."

Several members of the distinguished Literary Senior Society, to which Donald aspired, were in the front ranks of the cheering boys. Some tutors were there, Mr. Middleton amongst them, and the Elocutionary Professor strolled up and joined the crowd. Close beside Donald stood his dear and loyal chum, partly shielding precious

Fay from the observation of the crowd. Dr. Fleet, and the President, and the Rev. Mr. Dawson, and Mr. Judge Dawkins, all stood up when the boys came, and looked over Marcy's shoulder, smiling good-naturedly. It was the proudest moment of Donald Marcy's young and happy life. He stood very modestly, looking about, something misty gathering in his sparkling eyes. He could not have told why he felt so touched, so solemnized by all that hearty deference to a success which he knew now (as perhaps he had never really understood before) was only the first "round" in the long contest of real life.

"Boys," he said simply, coming forward, "I thank you for all your good wishes. I understand very well that it is the — the unfortunate accident which has given me the prize I had given up hoping for, that creates so much interest in my success. I don't take it to myself, for I don't deserve that. I take it to be the tribute of Harle University to plain, hard work, and to common, manly honor, such as Harle trains her boys to respect, and to practice, and always has, and always will. Three cheers for Harle!"

Three cheers for Harle! "Rah! Rah!

Rah!" And three more for Marcy! Three for Prexy! And three more still!

How the young lungs pumped out the torrent of sound! How far and wide the merry voices rang! How little it takes to give college boys a glorious time! And how gloriously they take it, when they get it!

"Mr. Don," said Fay, in a whisper at his side, "you ought to be perfectly happy."

Donald had turned his handsome head to answer her, when suddenly a new cry arose from the swaying, shouting mass. The fact that the plagiarism had been detected by a lady, and a young lady at that, was, of course, no small matter to the fellows, who are always keenly observant of visiting young ladies at college, and classify them in the college memory with a swift, critical stroke that amounts to divination. Who is pretty, who is plain, — that is matter of course. But who is "fast" or modest, who is a lady or not, who flirts or who holds herself at delicate feminine values; who is silly, or who is clever; who is superficially trained for society, or who is thoroughly educated, — these are the vital points. All sorts of admiring rumors about the Smith

College girl, who had outwitted the De Courtney committee, were afloat in Harle. The boys knew well enough that the girl was in that room, and that she was very much protected by her father and her brother and the President and the committee, and who knew how much more of the eminence and "position" of Harle? and the boys were not going to let her off altogether.

Vigorously the cry arose: —

"The young lady! The young lady! Three cheers for the girl-graduate! Three for the girl who cleaned out the committee! Hurrah for Miss Fleet! Hurrah! Hurrah!"

CHAPTER XX.

FAIR AND FREE.

Fay blushed like a Jacqueminot rosebud, and shrank quite out of sight behind her brother, who held her proudly. Donald, who could not touch her, looked at her through a divine mist in his young eyes; blind with love, and delight, and adoration.

"I think," said Jamie quietly, "you might as well just walk past the window with me, Fay. I would n't seem ashamed to be seen. The fellows mean all right. It 's awfully nice of them. I am here — and father — and it 's my room, and you are where you belong."

Just for an instant there flashed before the window a swift vision of a modest girl, leaning, blushing, on her brother's arm, and then —

Fay fluttered, frightened, out of sight upon the big chair with the cashmere drapery, behind the towering, awful figure of the President and the committee; and

the boys broke into a magnificent round of applause, and one fellow moved she be made an honorary member of the class, and this motion was carried with three times three, and it was a tremendous moment. Then Trouncey O'Grian's big voice was heard, calling the fellows off.

"We must n't bother the young lady, boys." But at the moment while the phalanx turned, to march singing down the street, a little bouquet came tossing lightly in and dropped at Fay Fleet's feet. It was gracefully done. The flowers were Southern jonquils, and they were thrown by Lee Calhoun.

Fay was to go to Boston that night with her father, on her way to Vermont. Donald had no opportunity now to see her alone.

"I shall come up this vacation," he said excitedly. "I shall be sure to come, — if I may?"

"I shall be glad to see you," murmured Fay, with some timidity. They did not talk much together. Donald ordered the carriage, and they all rode to the station, he and Jamie, Dr. Fleet and Fay. The talk was general, — but it was generally

particular; about the young people and their plans and hopes. Jamie with the valedictory next year, God willing — Donald and his De Courtney — Fay and her diploma, — they were a hopeful, merry lot. They spoke of the school in Massachusetts which Fay would take in September, wherein she would "cultivate the Greek expression" in dead earnest, having charge of the Greek department. They spoke of Jamie's longing to follow his father's profession, "if he could pull through." And Donald said he was to have money when he became of age next January, and that *he'd* see Jamie through; but Jamie shook his head; he did not like a debt, he said, even to his dear old Don. They spoke of Don, then, and of his future; and Donald thought he should study for the bar. His head swam with visions of some day rivaling the eminent Rufus Choate himself, and being cribbed by plagiarists in Harle University, who were detected by young lady visitors, just in time to save the honest competitor from defeat, and the unworthy one from disgrace.

Donald wrung Fay's hand in silence when they parted at the train. She had dropped her veil, and looked at him through it with

sweet, bright eyes, that fell before his steady gaze. And Dr. Fleet said: —

"God bless you, boys!" and they were gone.

Don and Jamie walked home together, not inclined to talk. The fellows were still out singing, and the streets stirred restlessly; the boys were singing the university chorus, "The College by the Sea."

"Oh, the college by the sea!
Like thy waves, thine honor be!
Fair and free,
Fair and free,
Harle! Harle! Forever — ever be!"

Donald's soul thrilled with the passion of the chorus, with the college loyalty so dear to every student's heart.

"Bless her, anyhow, J.!" he cried. "I would n't miss being an alumnus of old Harle for all I ever expect to be worth."

As the two boys came up College Street to their rooms, which were probably packed now with fellows, waiting for them, a Western Union Telegraph boy met them, walking quite fast — for a messenger boy. He stopped, and touched his cap.

"A dispatch for you, Mr. Marcy."

Donald took the yellow envelope lei-

surely; he had lived a life in which a telegram meant nothing in particular; he was laughing at something his chum had said, and looked the very dream of youth and beauty, and health and wealth, and hope and ambition, as he cast his merry eyes upon the paper, and read aloud: —

"Misfortune at home. Come immediately."

The dispatch was signed with the name of an uncle, his father's brother: "*Francis Marcy.*"

CHAPTER XXI.

TERRIBLE TROUBLE.

It was nearly nine o'clock in the morning when Donald rang the bell of his father's door, in Lexington Avenue. His dreary journey home had been varied by the protecting presence of Jerry McCarty, who had been sent on special business to New York, by the chief of the Harle police. There was a safe-robbery case, whereon Jerry was working a theory involving a Sophomore with a doubtful reputation (Jerry's theories seldom advanced beyond the Sophomore class), and Jerry was in communication with a city gang, for whom, he was pleased to believe, the Sophomore had acted as cat's-paw.

Jerry was very confidential and conversational with Marcy; and Donald, glad to be diverted from the misery into which the vague alarm of his uncle's telegram had plunged him, allowed Jerry to be as friendly as his heart could desire. Secretly, Jerry

was fond of the young collegian, as everybody else was, and he perceived that Marcy was in real trouble. The policeman regretted this. He tried to entertain the boy. He treated him to a choice selection of the most blood-curdling anecdotes of his profession; he could think of nothing more calculated to calm the mind in view of a great domestic affliction. Jerry's own view of the case was, that Mr. T. B. Marcy had embezzled to the tune of half a million, and gone to Canada.

He made up his mind to this, when Donald, with the instinctive confidence of a lonely and anxious fellow, showed his telegram to the big policeman, who had nabbed him and let him off so many times in Freshman and Sophomore days, and toward whom he had something of the feeling of a little boy toward an old family coachman, who shook him on the sly for unbuckling the harness.

Donald and Jerry did not take the sleeper; Don could not sleep and did not want to; so they could talk on the train freely.

Donald, as the dawn came on, began to be acutely anxious to get the morning paper.

Jerry began to be equally anxious that

he should not. As they approached the suburbs of New York, Jerry made what he thought to be a shrewd effort to get Don into the sleeper.

"A foive-minute nap, now, Misther Marcy. It would, beloike, favor ye up a bit. I 'll go for'ard and bespake yez a bunk. Ye 'll need a wink or two, sir, not knowin' whativer 's loike to befall yez. This here 's a wurreld of sorproisin' developmints, Mr. Marcy," urged Jerry mysteriously. "An American citizen, Mr. Don, had beloike best be prepared to fix his moind on any — well, on any part of the map, sir. I 've known affliction to take a geographical turn in the first of families. I 'd advoise ye to turn in and take a snooze, agin ye 're ready to meet poor luck. I 'll see to it, that naygur of a porter's callin' ye in airly season."

"What in the world can you mean, Jerry?" asked Donald, with a stare. He would not go into the sleeper, not even to please Jerry (who made the matter quite personal), but watched feverishly for the chance of a morning paper, which Jerry as restlessly watched to head off.

"Lave it to me, Mr. Marcy," said Jerry at last, with good-natured firmness. "There

ain't no nooz-boy on this train since the last one jumped off too late, and busted his blamed brains out. A friend of me own set on the corrups, so I happen to know. Ye put yer two fate aboard t' other sate here, and take a wink settin', and *I 'll* see the first paper stroikin' us betune here and the depot. Thrust me, sir," said Jerry solemnly.

Worn with excitement and distress, Donald yielded like a child to the big policeman's stratagem, and did, indeed, fall into a few minutes' troubled sleep. In that snatch of unconsciousness the train slowed up at a station, where a very minute and a very ragged newsboy, with a bundle of papers as large as himself, innocently attempted to board the train. His surprise was keen when he felt himself collared by the grip of a huge policeman disguised in citizen's dress (the little newsboy knew the general characteristics of the grip too well to mistake it), and landed on a sand-heap over a fence, with his papers. As the train steamed off, a silver quarter came following after, and the astonished vender of news perceived the policeman leisurely employed upon the platform in reading the headings of

a copy of the New York "Daily Telephone and Cable" as rapidly as a somewhat limited education would allow him; and then, without ado, he made a hard ball of that paper, flung it after the boy and the quarter, and disappeared within the car.

"I 'm sorry, Mr. Marcy," said Jerry, "but there ain't a doosed paper to be got aboard this blarsted train. The corruporration had ought to be subject to a sheriff's writ for it."

Jerry McCarty sat down by the restless lad. His face was grave, it might almost be called agitated. In his big, blundering heart he was thinking: —

"How shall I tell him? How ever shall I tell the boy?"

In twenty minutes — fifteen — ten — five — they would be in the Grand Central Depot. All the police force of Harle could not keep the popular Junior from reading the details of his terrible sorrow, blazoned in alliterative capitals, from scores of newspapers. Why, every newsboy two feet high would be bellowing the thing in Marcy's shrinking ears before he could put one hand in his pocket for the nickel, or take the first paper he could clutch in the other. He

would call for the "Daily Telephone and Cable," the great newspaper of which his uncle, Mr. Francis Marcy, was business manager. The cold drops began to start on Jerry's broad, shrewd, kindly face. Speak he must; speak he had *got* to. Jerry felt himself in a terrible position. The delicate duty of breaking a young heart with awful tidings had never fallen to Jerry before. It seemed to him then that he would rather face a mob single-handed, or sit on a body-snatching case alone at midnight in a graveyard.

"How ever shall I tell him? Howly Mother help him — sich a loikely lad!"

Five minutes — three — two —

"Well, here we are," said Donald, getting to his feet, valise in hand, and coat upon his arm.

"Mr. Marcy, sir," said Jerry, trembling, "I 've that to tell yez as I 'd prefer to lave to some member of the New York force. They 're used to it, may be. I ain't. May be if I 'd had an eddication, I should n't be so put about, — if I 'd had a college course myself, sir, sich as I 'm manin' to give me boy as is at present in the grammar school, — it would larn me how."

But there, trained only by the school of his own kind heart and busy life educated in human tragedies, Jerry McCarty turned abruptly, and looked the gentleman's son in the startled eye.

"Yer fayther hain't gone to Canady, Mr. Marcy. He 's dead! He dropped in Wall Street, on ' Change, — bein' that overset by the panic, — and I 've *got* to tell ye, for somebody must. These college men," said Jerry, with emotion, "would tell it in more larned language. There ain't one," choked Jerry, "would feel so bad to do it. Why, sir, the toimes I 've nabbed ye, and you only a Freshman, that young, and never treated me to an uncivil wurred; an' I 've seen ye lift yer cap to me, as if I was a gintleman, yer currels blowin' an' yer eyes a-laughin', — an' ivery toime I arrested of ye I liked ye better for it; an' now to be the one to hit ye with a blamed, brutal piece of news like this" —

"Would you mind coming along in the horse-car with me, Jerry?" asked Donald faintly. "Don't speak. Don't say a word. Only I think I should feel better to have somebody by I know. See, Jerry? I don't

— I don't seem to feel very *old*, Jerry," faltered the boy.

Like a little fellow he took his old friend's burly arm; and, as if he had been a little fellow, Jerry led him, in silence, to his father's door.

The butler let him in without a word. The great house was still. The parlors were shrouded in white linen for the summer, preparatory to the family's annual flight to Newport. His father, kept by business, was accustomed to stay much alone in the deserted house, cared for only by the laundress, while the invalid and extravagant wife presided over the Newport villa, and the laughing son yachted or flirted here and there. Donald had never thought much about it before. It must have been lonely enough. Oh, poor father!

Donald took off his straw hat, gave his valise to the butler, and looked about, dazed and trembling.

"He 's in the library, Mr. Don," said the butler, hesitating.

"How is my mother, Perkins?" asked Don, trying to command himself.

"There 's three of 'em with her, sir; besides the nurse and the new maid."

"Three what?"

"Doctors, sir. She's that bad. She's been goin' on all night. We could n't, none of us, get a wink of sleep," added Perkins, in an aggrieved tone. "She would n't see you, sir. The doctor's orders are peremtory. She 's had highsterics and conwulsions complicated."

"Is my uncle here, Perkins?"

"No, sir. He left word you was to call at his house, if you wanted to see him before night. He can't get off till then. He is very busy. The paper is much occupied, sir, with the panic. He 'll be over after dinner."

"Who is there *to* see?" pleaded Donald, with trembling lip. The butler shook his head.

"There 's *him*, sir. I don't know of nobody else, unless you was to want an interview with the undertaker. I don't think you 'd care to meet the new maid, sir."

"Take me," said Donald, in a shaking voice, — "take me to *him!*"

Perkins preceded his young master with a silent bow, and noiselessly pushed open the library door. The shades were drawn. The room was dark, and its curious chill

struck to Donald's heart. In the centre of the solemn place lay stretched the only thing there was to welcome Donald to his father's house.

"Shut the door, Perkins," faltered the boy. "You may go. Leave me alone — with my father."

The funeral was over. The last things were all done. All the little touches with which love cheats itself by trying to serve the darling dead, and to make believe that it is of any use, had been given. The last kiss had been dropped upon the icy brow. The last flower had been slipped into the unresponsive hand. The last tear had scalded the dear face. Donald had listened with blind eyes to the dirge, and with choking breath to the prayer, and commanded himself as best he could, and sat by his uncle, silently, and they had driven home, and Mr. Francis Marcy had said, in a business-like tone, but not untenderly: —

"Well, Donald, I will come this evening, and we 'll talk things out. It 's got to be done. The sooner the better. I 'll do my duty by you."

And Donald had thanked his uncle,

vaguely wondering what he meant, and had come into the desolate house, and was considering what to do next, when Perkins told him that his mother wished to see him in her room. Don had seen his mother once or twice, but she had been too ill to speak to him. A vision of a haggard face upon a lace pillow, the feeble motion of a frail hand, as if he stood between her and the air, — a fainting turn, and another, and then another, — such had been the meeting between the widow and the fatherless lad. Now she was calmer, and he must go up to her. He dreaded it.

Donald did not feel that he knew his mother very well; he had nothing against her; she had always treated him kindly; but when he was a little boy he passed his life with nurses, and when he became a big one, he was sent away to school. She had always been a sick woman, — and a really sick one, — but she did not know how to lighten the load of her sufferings as it fell upon her family; she was not one of the invalid mothers to whom many a big, well, restless boy owes the tenderest memories, and the sweetest restraints, and the highest inspirations of his robust life. Such as she

was, she would remain. Grief was not likely to work a miracle upon such a nature, at such an age. Such as she was, Donald must accept the burden, bear it filially, and find out how to adjust his undisciplined, young life to it.

He was thinking of this as he climbed the heavily-carpeted, soundless stairs, to his mother's room. He had never borne any real responsibility. The training of the class crew was the heaviest he had known.

The new maid (a pretty girl, probably distasteful to Perkins because she preferred the coachman) let her master into his mother's boudoir. The old nurse, Maria, who greeted him familiarly, having admitted him to that room in short trousers and long curls, preceded him across the familiar dazzle of the blue and gold drapery, bric-a-brac, and mirrors, to the shaded bedroom where the invalid, in a foam of lace and sachet, lay upon an Oriental couch of many colors, examining samples of black crape.

"Good-morning, mother!" said the boy, struggling with himself. "I hope you feel a little better?"

For answer, the sick woman burst into a flood of tears, and for some moments sobbed convulsively.

"He was my soul's other half!" she wailed. "I am bereft of all that I ever loved or lived for."

Now Donald had a certain impression that his father and mother had never been romantically attached to each other, at least since his acquaintance with them, and that the most harmonious sympathy was hardly familiar to their relation. He therefore heard his mother's passionate outcry with some surprise, but was wise enough to say nothing about it.

"Except, of course, my son," added the invalid, as an afterthought; "you are my all in all now, Donald."

"Thank you, mother," said Don, with trembling lip. It was a pallid sort of home-love; but he felt profoundly, at that moment, that it was all he had, and that he must live for it dutifully and faithfully.

"I shall try to be as much comfort as I can, mother," he added, looking with real tenderness at her haggard face. "You must teach me. You must tell me all I can do for you. I hope I shall be a better son than I used to be."

"Your uncle is keeping something back," said Mrs. Marcy abruptly.

"What about?" asked Don.

He had had no conversation with his uncle yet, except about the details of his father's death. They were few enough. In the height of the panic he had dropped, at a little past two o'clock, just as he was leaving Wall Street to come home. He was quite dead when they picked him up. The doctor called it heart disease, and if anybody said anything more, Don had never heard it.

"It 's my belief," said Mrs. Marcy, "that your father has lost very heavily."

Donald had not thought of such a thing, and he said so, starting with surprise.

"I never was well enough to discuss business," sobbed the widow. "Your father never confided in me. But my intuitions are very keen. I am not to be deluded, Don. You will find there have been losses. It is very unfortunate — in my state. My ways of living are merely the conditions of existence to me, — no more. Remove them, and I should die in three months."

"It *can't* be very serious, mother," urged Donald, not without a secret anxiousness perfectly new to him. "Don't distress yourself. I will see Uncle Francis to-night, and talk it all over. Never fear, mother.

You shall be looked after, at all events. I 'll take care of you!"

"I shall have to go to Newport, *anyway*," wept Mrs. Marcy. "You know I should not live the summer out, in any other air. Then there 's Dr. Hellingpfeiffer's annual fee; the sum your father always has paid him gives me a claim, a priority. I secure his services by the year, and he is always to be had when my attacks come on. It would be impossible to economize on the *doctor*. Oh, what, what will become of me?" she wailed.

"Don't cry, mother. Don't you fear. *I 'll* look after you," repeated Donald manfully. But his eye, warned by a sudden new intelligence, traveled around the sick-room, whose luxurious appointments were so much a matter of course to him that he had never given a thought to them before, in all his life. The heavy velvet carpet; the expensive patent springs on the doors to prevent a slam, or jar, or creak; the long, satin draperies, hanging from the great, plate-glass windows, like the trains of princesses; the exquisite shades for shielding the eyes; the fold upon fold of satin and "real" lace covering the bed, the pillows, the couch, and

the nightdress of the invalid which showed becomingly beneath her embroidered sack; the eider-down robes, silk-covered, used as freely as less wealthy people use blankets; the inlaid invalid's tray and table; the silver and Sèvres upon it; the high-waged figure of Maria in the doorway; the new maid in the other room, dusting a statuette by a fashionable sculptor, with a brush of peacock's feathers. At these things Donald looked with a sick sinking at the heart. What did it all mean? How bad was it? And what worse was to come?

He waited restlessly for his uncle, who came after dinner, and, locking the library door, and lighting a cigar, began at once, with the manner of a man who has a hard job on hand, and means to get it over with.

Mr. Francis Marcy was a gentlemanly man; polished, cold, calm, hard of face, and unmoved in manner.

"Well, Donald, I have purposely put off this interview till the funeral was over. It was more decent, for one thing. Then I didn't care to worry you, until it became necessary. It has now become so. You observe that there has been no will read. It is customary not to read the will till after the services."

"I did n't know that, sir. I did n't know much about — such things. I never — nobody ever died that I cared about, before."

His voice faltered. His uncle bowed slightly, as if he should say: "Very proper. An appropriate filial sentiment." But all that he really did say was this: —

"Your father left no will. He had nothing to will. He has left no property."

Donald started, with a low, horrified cry.

"Oh, is it so bad as *that?* Poor mother!"

"It is worse than that, sir! Your father speculated. He scattered it to the four winds. He has been deep in for two years. This panic simply ruined him. He died of the shock, — and he died a beggar, — and he knew it. Poor Thomas," added Mr. Francis Marcy, bringing his short, sharp sentence round to a decorous sigh, "was always a schemer and a dreamer. He dared too much. It was his way. He lacked ballast — in business matters. But *de mortuis* — poor Thomas has gone. You and your mother are left. You have not got at this moment, sir, three hundred dollars to your name."

"But, my mother?" gasped Don. "The house? The — the maid? The doctor? Where can my mother live?"

"The house is mortgaged over its eaves," replied Uncle Francis. "The Newport estate *may* be deeded to her, — but I doubt it. I have n't found any such papers yet. Your father left certain papers to my charge. I should have been administrator, if there had been anything to administrate upon. There is n't."

"I must leave college, Uncle Francis," faltered Donald. "I must leave college," he repeated decisively. "I must go right to work. I must support my mother and myself."

"I don't see any other way," returned Mr. Francis Marcy. "I 'm sorry, Donald," he added politely.

"What in the world can I do?" gasped Donald. "I never earned any money in my life. I thought — when I had graduated — I should enter the bar. I meant to be a distinguished lawyer, Uncle Francis."

"Well," said his uncle slowly, knocking the ashes from his half-burnt cigar lightly into an antique Egyptian cup that served for an ash-receiver, upon the carved oak mantel; "there are different views about that. I 'll tell you what *mine* are, if you care to hear them."

CHAPTER XXII.

"I WILL WAIT."

It was a July day in Vermont. The sun had been far too hot for comfort all the morning, and until well past noon; and when the long shadows from Mount Tipton stole, with purple feet, across the valley, the village drew breath, and began to put on its afternoon dress, and was glad of it. The farmhouses — prisons when winter-bound — were palaces of life in the heart of summer. To them was given such pomp of the shadow-chased hills, and such glory of the clover-crimsoned fields, and such splendor of the throbbing skies, as the stifling towns panted for, and paid the best of prices to procure. Each of these desolate homes was now a thriving house of entertainment, where the daughters of the house stood no more breathing the frost off the windows to see a stranger pass, but blossomed in the crispest of colored cotton-satine gowns, with fresh crimps, and white aprons, to wait on the

supper-table of a busy, chattering, laughing house. The most popular boarding-house in town was Mrs. Joe Jouncey's of toboggan memory, and Lamentations took the lady boarders out every day up and down the fern-clad banks of the mountain-trout brooks, at fifty cents an hour.

Mr. Jasper, the proprietor of The Hack, was much exercised in his mind that afternoon. The minister had a guest that morning, arrived by the night express, who had declined to patronize The Hack.

"He said he could n't afford it," complained Mr. Jasper to the postmistress. "A likely story! *Him* not affordin' anything. He walked all the way up, on his two legs; just as if he 'd grow'd here."

"In this blazing sun!" reproved the postmistress. "That boy, who never had a stroke of hardship in his life! And pop'lar as he was in Tipton! I sh'd like to know why you *let* him, Jarsper, *I* should!"

"Why, I never thought on 't!" gasped the proprietor of The Hack. "It never came into my head to *offer* him The Hack. I don't believe he 'd have put foot in Her, more 'n if I 'd horsewhipped him. He had that look. I would n't ha' darst."

It was now well on in the afternoon, and Donald and Fay were, for the first time, alone together. They had chatted with the family, of surface things, all day. Don had not said much about his circumstances or his plans. Nobody had felt like asking for what he did not offer. He had petted the cannibal cat; and shaken hands with the little maid, and inquired after her elbows; and had gone out to feed Old William; and he had wandered about, and thought how delightful the parsonage was without wood-boxes; and he had gone upstairs to his old room, and gloried at the absence of the air-tight stove, and felt dazed at the transformation from the frozen water-pitcher to the English violets on the toilet-table; from the frosted to the open window, from all the austerities and sterilities of the Vermont winter, to the tenderness and the warm, rich, abundant life of the mountain mid-summer.

Then he had come down and looked at the new books in Dr. Fleet's study a little while, and sat by Mrs. Fleet's sewing-chair, at her feet, like a son, while she mended a rip in a glove he felt he could not afford to throw away; and everybody had been ten-

der as " own folks " to him ; but no one had intruded on his sorrows or his anxieties, and they had talked a good deal about Jamie, and wished that he were there, and Don had said that J.'s letters had been the greatest comfort of his life, since — since — But there he had broken off, and asked Fay abruptly, if she felt like walking down into the orchard with him. And here, at last, they were.

Fay was charming that day, — she was simply charming. There is, perhaps, no better or more womanly word to tell the kind of sweetness, of delightfulness, that belongs to a girl like Fay. She was so quiet, — in deference to Don's sorrow, — yet she was so cheerful, to put him at his ease ; she was so modest, yet she was so frank and friendly ; she had such girlish cheeks, yet she had such deep, intelligent eyes ; she laughed so, and yet she looked so — Donald felt as if he were caught in an undertow of loveliness, and carried off his feet.

She had on a white dress. How divine she was in that white dress ! It was thin, but not too thin ; her round arms just gleamed through the sheer sleeves ; the lace came modestly to her soft throat ; she wore wide,

blue ribbons at the neck and waist, and little loops of narrow blue tied the front of the dress, and tossed with the wearer's light breath. Don had never seen her in the halo of summer-robes before; she seemed to shine and melt before him like something from a finer world than his.

Fay sat down on an old apple-stump, carved by Jamie into a rustic seat, and Donald threw himself upon the grass at her feet. The sunlight came through the apple-leaves, a flickering, fluttering sheen, like moving water, and played upon the two young people, — over the girl's white dress, over the boy's earnest, upturned face. It had grown older, that handsome face; it had grown five years older since Fay saw it last, five weeks ago.

"Now," she said, in her decided voice, "tell me *all* about it."

"Well," answered Donald, "it 's soon told, Miss Fay. It is just as I wrote you, only worse. Father did n't leave a cent — of all his money. It 's gone. It 's *all* gone. I am as poor as the bootblack in the depot. I have a sick and expensive mother. I 've got to support her and myself, and I 've got to do it right away. That 's the upshot of

it. Of course, I 've got to leave Harle. That 's the worst of it."

"Cruel!" cried Fay impulsively.

"Oh, no!" The grave, sweet smile of his new maturity lighted the face of the thoughtless lad. "It 's hard, but it 's only what lots of other fellows have to do. I 've never *had* anything before, — anything to do, or bear, or be. I 've always got what I wanted. I 've had plenty of money. I never knew what it was to be thwarted in anything I cared about, before. It had got to come. It 's *life*," said the young man stoutly. "I 'm only beginning to find it out. *I* can get along, but I declare, Miss Fay, I don't see how under the heavens I *am* going to provide for mother. Poor mother! She needs so many things. She 's so — so — she 's so *extravagantly* sick. Not that I blame my mother," he added loyally. "She can't help it. She 's always had them. She suffers a great deal. It takes the maid, and the nurse, and the doctor to keep her up anyhow."

"Good gracious!" cried Fay.

"It can't be helped," said the young man dully. A desperate look came over his uplifted eyes; he turned them away from her.

"It is going to be a terrible pull, and a *long* one," he said significantly. Fay flushed slightly.

"Never mind," she said softly; "she is your mother. Do your best. You won't be sorry. Why in the world does n't your uncle help you?"

"He has offered me a place on the paper. I wrote you, did n't I? He says that 's all he can do."

"Are you going to take it?"

"I have n't decided. I came up here to decide. I wanted your advice. I spent fifteen of the last thirty dollars I have in the world to get here. I don't dare let Uncle Francis know I 'm here. But I *had* to come. Lord knows when I shall ever even get the money to see your face again!"

The poor boy pulled his hat over his eyes, and turned his face over on the grass, with a groan.

"I did n't take a parlor car," he pleaded, "nor the sleeper. And I walked everywhere. I never traveled so in all my life. I would n't want you to think I *wasted* money to get here. I took a luncheon from home, — cold mutton. I did n't buy a single thing!" he said earnestly.

"Why does n't your uncle keep you at college one year more, till you can graduate?" demanded Fay, with the hot tears in her eyes. Donald shook his head.

"He did not offer to. He has a family — my cousins — all girls; they 're an expensive lot. He has n't offered to do anything else for me but give me this place I told you of. It 's no soft berth, I can tell you! But I don't mind *that*. If I could only earn enough to live!"

"What will you earn? What will you have to do? What 's your position?"

"Oh, I 'm to begin as a reporter; night work, — up till four A. M., — police courts, and dog-fights, and that kind of literature. If I am extraordinarily successful, I may make two or three hundred dollars the first year. . . . I wish you could see the lace on my mother's pillows! Why, the curtains at two of her windows cost five hundred dollars! Her doctor has been paid a regular salary of six thousand a year, just for her case alone."

Fay, to whom such facts and figures were as foreign as the best parsonage methods of hashing a three days' old roast were to Donald, opened her black eyes wide with

appalled wonder. For the moment she was simply silenced.

"I ought to say," proceeded Donald, "in justice to my uncle, that he said he would provide for mother till the year is out, — till January. He has found a place for her on the Connecticut coast, — a little cheap box, about such as we use for a porter's lodge at Newport. The Newport place is sold. It had to go. Everything was left everyhow. Father was terribly in debt. My poor mother — after such a life as hers — has got to live in a way her own maid would turn up her nose at. She *says* it will kill her."

"I don't believe it," said Fay cheerfully, shaking her pretty head.

"Well, anyhow, she 's in an awful state over it now. The maid had to go; but Maria stays by her. Uncle said that was reasonable. He said she would really have to keep Maria. He suggested taking her to his house at Cape May, to save expense. But the girls would n't hear of it. They 're a gay lot. Cousin Amelia said she would n't have their house turned into a hospital; so uncle got this shanty I speak of, and packed mother and Maria off down there last week. She took it terribly. I 'm all fagged out with it."

"Well, it 's something," suggested Fay hopefully, "if your uncle will do so much. How do you know, Mr. Don, he does n't mean to support your mother till you really can, only he does n't mean to tell you so?"

"Perhaps," said Don, brightening. "I never thought of that. Uncle is a queer fellow. He has all sorts of views and theories about hardship, and making your own way, and what he calls LIFE. Great goodness! as if life did n't tackle a fellow hard enough anyhow you put it. Why, I used to think — I really used to think — life *was a pleasant thing!*" cried the lad, sitting up straight, and looking at Fay with a half-funny, half-pathetic seriousness.

"You will again," nodded the young lady sedately; "you will think so again, some time. You have n't come to the end of it."

"Uncle has the notion," pursued Donald, "that graduating is of no importance. He says I 've shown some ability — on the De Courtney. If it had n't been for the De Courtney I should n't have been allowed the privilege of reporting dog-fights and street-rows news on the great 'Daily Telephone and Cable.' And that reminds me — Trour

cey O'Grian is dropped! Is n't it too bad? He was terribly cut up at first, J. says, for he 'd been quite a dig in Trouncey's way; but he had n't the head, you see, — it was no go. Well, he was quite cut up till his father got him a berth in a big grain business in St. Louis, and Trouncey 's gone at it, squaring off just as if he were in the ring. He expects to make ten thousand dollars in a year. I wish *I* could make ten thousand dollars in twenty years!" sighed Don.

"That reminds *me*," said Fay, looking mischievous. "Mr. Lee Calhoun asked Jamie if he would n't bring him up here and introduce him to me."

"The — mischief he did!" growled Don.

"And was n't it too bad about the races?" asked Fay, going right on, as if Mr. Calhoun had been an apple-leaf that she brushed away from the conversation.

"An awful pity!" said Donald. "Harle has n't been so beaten for ten years!"

"Did n't they say they missed you?"

"Why, yes; something of the sort. There was a good deal of blow about it. Some fellows thought it lost us the race. But I could n't help that. I *could n't* go, as it was."

"Is n't the 'Daily Cable' a rich paper?" asked Fay abruptly.

"Oh! *rich* enough — yes."

"And it has a fair literary department. I know it. F. Peter Piper edits it."

"Piper is a Harle man," observed Donald.

"Now look here," said Fay cheerily. "I don't see but you stand a real chance. Perhaps your uncle is nicer than you believe. May be he means to push you just as fast as you prove *pushable*. How do you know but in ten years you 'll be writing the leader of New York city on — say, International Law?"

"You 're a good, sensible, cheerful, hopeful girl," said Don. "I feel fifty per cent. better since I talked with you. I was in the blue, fifty fathoms down, when I came in. I tell you one thing, Miss Fay, — I 'll *be* all I *am*, and if I 'm anything worth two cents, it will be all owing to you, anyhow."

"Oh, no!" cried Fay.

"Oh, don't you see?" cried the lad, suddenly springing from the grass, and standing before her, hat in hand. "Don't you *see* why I am so desperately down? Don't you see it 's all because — because" —

"Oh, don't!" cried blushing Fay.

"I won't if you don't want me to," gasped the boy. And there he came to a dead pause. Fay cast down her eyes, and her breath came a little short. The light between the apple-leaves fluttered off her face, and left it in a swift, mute shadow. Donald had grown very pale. He did not, would not speak; but still stood staring, hat in hand.

"I — did n't say I — did n't *want* you to," admitted Fay, in a thrilling whisper.

Oh, then the boy was at her feet! Then his torrent of words poured out! Then he told her how he loved her — how he *loved* her! How to make her his dear wife, if he ever, *ever* could, was the only thing he cared for, or dreamed of, or lived for, in all the world; how terrible it was that this had come to separate them, — that the burdens laid so unexpectedly upon him (but too sacred to be shaken off) were going to be so heavy and so hard; that it would be so long, at the earliest, before he could dare to hope to marry, and how unmanly he felt it to ask a noble girl like her to wait for him.

"Why, you could marry *anybody!*" cried the lad, in a flight of rapture and despair. "And it may be years and years before I can pay for our Mondays' dinners!"

"I could help," suggested Fay softly. "I am to get a good salary. I like to teach. I 'd rather earn. I 'd rather help."

"Oh, kiss me, Fay!" said Donald, in a low, awed voice. "You are too good for me. I 'm not fit to touch you. Kiss me, dear, will you? Here."

He kneeled before her as if she had been the saint of his young life, and she touched her lips to his bared forehead, and then to his beautiful curls.

"*Would* you wait for me, Fay? Would you, *really?*"

"I would wait for you all my life," said Fay.

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